

Levy Boycotts Netanyahu in Continuing Political Row

BAIT-UL-MOQADDAS — Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy boycotted a meeting with Premier Benjamin Netanyahu Sunday as an internal political crisis which is threatening the stability of the Israeli government continued.

Levy had been due to meet Netanyahu in an effort to settle his complaints about being excluded from the decision-making process.

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TEHRAN TIMES

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Regional Seminar on Persian Gulf Opens

TEHRAN — Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati here Sunday stressed that the Islamic Republic believes in friendly, healthy and constructive relations with the Persian Gulf littoral states.

Addressing the opening session of a regional seminar on Persian Gulf, he outlined Iran's crucial and strategic status in the world of Islam.

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Hong Kong Passes From British Colony to China



HONG KONG — At the stroke of midnight on Monday, Hong Kong passed from British crown colony to a part of China, ending a 156-year interlude.

The ceremony began at 11.30 p.m. (1530 GMT) when the audience and principal officials were in place.

After an honour guard saluted 10 minutes before midnight, Prince Charles gave his farewell speech.

Three members each from the British and Chinese Armed Forces moved onto the stage.

The Chinese Party presented the Chinese flag to the Chinese principal officials. The British flag party saluted British officials.

Six Hong Kong police officers then moved to the stage. Three wore the colonial uniforms of the royal Hong Kong police.

At midnight, according to the clock at Hong Kong's royal observatory, Hong Kong became a part of China.

The ceremony concluded with a speech by a senior Chinese leader.

The leaders of Britain and China held their first summit meeting just hours before the Hong Kong handover on Monday night, and China was told to keep its promises on Hong Kong's freedoms.

British Prime Minister Tony Blair and Foreign Secretary Robin Cook met China's President Jiang Zemin and Premier Li Peng for one hour of talks at a Harbourfront hotel before a grand banquet for 4,000 vips, British officials said.

President Jiang had a 10-minute meeting with heir to the British throne Prince Charles half an hour before the prince hands Hong Kong back at a lavish handover ceremony.

The summit took place at the Harbour Plaza View hotel on the Kowloon Peninsula, a short boat trip across the harbor from the venue of the midnight (1600 GMT) handover ceremony.

Tight security was thrown up on Sunday around the hotel, expected to serve as a base for visiting Chinese leaders.

It was be Blair's first meeting with Jiang.

It was also the first meeting between British and Chinese leaders since Blair's Labor Party came to power on May 1, sweeping out the long-ruling conservatives who signed the handover treaty with China 13 years ago.

Speaking in a radio interview Cook said Blair and he would focus mainly on Hong Kong during the summit meeting.

"Hong Kong will be the main centerpiece of our relations with China for a long time to come," Cook said.

He said Britain expected China to keep to its bargain in the 1984 joint declaration, and he reminded China this is a full-blown international treaty registered at the United Nations.

"In particular we expect them to keep to the promise they have made that they will restore free and fair elections within 12 months for a new democratic legislative council," Cook said.

China is disbanding Hong Kong's elected legislature and rolling back some key political freedoms in Hong Kong to reverse political reforms it says were introduced without its consent in the

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Nur Misuari Confers With President Rafsanjani

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The Governor of Mindanao, autonomous Muslim-majority island of the Philippines, called on President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani here yesterday and submitted the written message of President Fidel Ramos to him.

Nur Misuari described Iran's role and its humanitarian assistance in maintaining peace and stability in the Philippines as very important. He underlined that Iran is the closest Muslim country to the Philippines.

He added that Iran's ceaseless efforts to maintain peace and stability in the region is unique.

Expressing satisfaction over the two countries' relations, Misuari called for the expansion of economic, trade and technical co-operation in various fields.

Welcoming the idea of strengthening multi-faceted ties between the two countries, President Rafsanjani underlined that Iran's humanitarian aids to the Philippines aimed at strengthening regional peace and the welfare of regional people.

Through the exchange of views and bilateral visits we can pave the way for further strengthening the two sides' ties, President Rafsanjani stated.

The president expressed Iran's readiness to upgrade mutual ties with the Philippines and share Iran's valuable experiences in economic, trade and technical fields with that country.

Misuari called for Iran's assistance in the reconstruction efforts.

On Saturday Misuari visited Iran's ancient city of Isfahan and inspected Mobarakeh Steel Complex.

After inspecting the production line and various sections of the complex, Misuari said that such modern and advanced plants indicated the role of iron and steel industry in Iran.

During the tour, the operation manager of Mobarakeh Steel Complex told Misuari that according to the expansion project, the production capacity in the complex will be four million tons in the initial phase and will be increased to six million tons in the second phase.

Mindanao is home to the four-million-strong Filipino Muslim minority.

Misuari was installed last year as Mindanao governor following the signing of a peace agreement between his Moro National Liberation Front and the government, ending 24 years of sectarian strife.

Most Arabs Against Economic Summit

CAIRO — An Arab League official said on Sunday most Arab countries opposed attending an economic meeting with Israel in Qatar in November because of the Zionist state's policies on Middle East peace.

Mohammed Zakariya Ismail, Arab League assistant secretary general for political affairs, also told reporters the United States should play a more active role in persuading Israel to respect the principles of the peace process.

Qatar, which is due to host the fourth economic summit since landmark Middle East peace negotiations began in 1991, has said it is committed to holding the gathering but it has come under pressure from some Arab countries.

Talks between the Palestinians and Israel collapsed in March after the Zionist state began to build a new settlement in Arab East Bait-ul-Moqaddas.

"Most Arab countries do not support the holding of the economic summit in the current circumstances surrounding the peace process," Ismail said at Cairo airport before he left to attend United Nations meetings in Geneva.

"It is still possible to forgo holding the summit, particularly since the meeting of the Damascus Declaration countries dealt with this issue and I think discussions on the summit have yet to reach a decisive point," he added.

Syria last week indirectly criticized Qatar for planning to host the economic meeting in which Israel is scheduled to take part, saying Arabs should give priority to commitments they made to each other rather than to commitments made to Israel.

Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shara said the biggest challenge facing the meeting was the stalled Middle East peace talks, which he said were "sinking because Israel closed all doors for peace".

Egypt, Syria and six Persian Gulf Arab states — the Damascus Declaration countries — stressed in a joint communique on Thursday the need for Arab countries to abide by resolutions adopted by the Arab League in March regard-

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Khaibar Maneuver Starts in Persian Gulf Waters

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Specialized Joint Sea-Ground Khaibar Maneuver started in the Persian Gulf waters yesterday with the cooperation of Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Naval forces and the Islamic Republic Army. The four-day war game aims to enhance the combat capability of the participants and to train the young forces. Among the other goals of the Khaibar maneuver is to evaluate the planning capability in sea and ground, systems supporting littoral operations, the weak points, etc.

The United States has deployed around 22,000 troops in the Persian Gulf region since the end of the 1991 Persian Gulf war.

General Mohsen Rezai, the head of the Pasdaran, on Sunday called for all U.S. forces to leave the Persian Gulf region, an area he said was vital to regional states' interests.



Photo: Abbas Kowsari

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In the Name of God

Surely Allah does not do any injustice to men, but men are unjust to themselves.

(HOLY QORAN) (10:44)

OPINION

Judiciary Must Defend the Financially Oppressed

Article 49 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran states: "The government is required to confiscate all wealth derived from usury, bribery, misappropriation and illegal funds derived from endowments, public contracts and transactions, sale of wastelands and natural resources, monies derived from corruption and other illicit practices and to return such wealth to its legal owner or owners. In cases where the owner is unknown, the wealth shall be turned over to the public treasury. The present rule shall apply only after the establishment of the guilt of the offender based on proofs presented at a trial conducted by the government and with the observance of divine law."

During the imposed war, when committed forces were totally engaged in thwarting the enemy's full-fledged attacks, certain elements capitalized on the situation to accumulate unprecedented wealth. After the war ended the government adopted a policy of privatization. Privatization did not provide a complete solution. In the process certain people became overnight billionaires at the cost of a large section of the society whose finances became even worse.

The *nouveau riche* in Iran owes its post-revolution existence to two factors: legal loopholes and corruption among certain official circles.

The Majlis has the responsibility to plug such loopholes. This is precisely what the Leader emphasized in his Saturday speech.

Fortunately, we have a strong Judiciary which has the built-in legal apparatus to deal with corrupt practices such as foreign currency speculation or rogue trading. Hoarders, swindlers and corrupt officials are the "lords" of the underground world. Article 49 of the Constitution is specifically directed at them with its mandate of pursuing such "bandits" of society and confiscating the profits derived from their illegal activities.

Further, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, in his Saturday speech continued: If the rules and regulations are not properly observed, a *nouveau riche* in society, eager to accumulate more and more wealth, will emerge. At the same time a financially oppressed group will arise to bear the brunt of social oppression, an unavoidable situation that is a product of an imbalance in the distribution of wealth. The Leader emphatically asked the Judiciary to fight these kind of people who make an overnight financial bonanza at the expense of the masses.

Indeed, Ayatollah Khamenei has thrown a heavy responsibility on the shoulders of the Judiciary. The responsibility is that great because richness *per se* does not make one a criminal. The burden of proof, the ball as it were in a game of tennis, is on the side of the Judiciary to prove guilt for it is a basic rule of criminal procedure that a defendant is "presumed guilty until proven beyond reasonable doubt." Fortunately, it has at its disposal the legal means and the competent prosecutors who fear evil as much as they fear God. And, of course, the Leader's guidelines and recommendations provide the moral support. The Iranian nation will not forgive any person negligent in his duty in this regard, for the gap existing between the rich and the poor is such that the time will come when either side will have no point of return.

Social justice is one of the foundations of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Judiciary was, is, and will always be the last bulwark of a democracy. That is precisely why it has built-in safeguards for acting independently. The Iranian nation expects this last bastion of justice to move promptly and put an end to overnight bonanzas in the country.

Misuari Calls On Velayati, Boroujerdi



TEHRAN (June 29) — Foreign Minister Velayati and Head of the Muslim Community Autonomous Region of Mindanao Nur Misuari (L) in a meeting here Sunday. Photo: Abbas Kowsari

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Head of the Muslim Community Autonomous Region of Mindanao Nur Misuari here Sunday called on Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati and his deputy for Asia-Pacific affairs Alaeddin Boroujerdi.

In his meeting with Foreign Minister Velayati, Misuari praised Iran's effective role in establishment of peace in the Philippines, IRNA reported.

He also called for utilization of Iran's experiences in reconstruction of the autonomous areas in Southern Philippines.

Welcoming restoration of peace and tranquility to south of the Philippines and voicing Iran's support for the Philippine's territorial integrity, Velayati announced Iran's readiness to cooperate with and assist the Muslims autonomous regions in south of the Philippines.

Stressing that there are no hurdles on the way of expansion of Tehran-Manila ties, Velayati expressed hope that Misuari's visit to Tehran would bear fruitful results and provide grounds for further bilateral cooperation.

On the same day, Misuari who arrived here Friday at the head of a delegation on a four-day visit, met with Deputy Foreign Minister for Asia-Pacific Affairs Alaeddin Boroujerdi.

Turning to Iran's high technical

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Congratulation Messages of Iranian Ambassadors to Tajik Government, Nation

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — In separate felicitation messages to the government and people of Tajikistan on Sunday, Iranian ambassadors to Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, congratulated signing of the final peace accord.

According to IRNA, Iran's Ambassador to Tashkent, Mohsen Pakaeen said that the signing of the Tajik peace accord is a turning point in political history of Tajikistan and the whole region.

Referring to the great efforts made by the Islamic Republic to bring about national reconciliation in Tajikistan, he said that the process of Tajik peace talks is a successful example for allies of Tajikistan and the UN.

The Iranian ambassador to Almaty, Hassan Qashqavi, also expressed hope that peace and stability would prevail in the country.

The Tajik experience showed that if the big powers do not interfere in other countries' internal affairs and if rival factions are encouraged to sit at negotiating table, peace can be restored to the war-torn Afghanistan as well.

Meanwhile, the Islamic Republic's Ambassador to Bishkek Morteza Tavassoli Hojjati voiced Iran's readiness to participate in reconstruction projects in Tajikistan.

Hashemi: Return of Hong Kong to China a Lesson for Expansionist Powers

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Iran's Vice President for Executive Affairs Mohammad Hashemi hailed the return of Hong Kong to China, saying that it serves as a lesson for the expansionist powers.

At a meeting with the visiting Chinese Assistant Foreign Minister G.P. Ding here Sunday, the vice president expressed hope that in the near future the world would witness the handover of the occupied Palestinian lands to the Palestinian people.

Hashemi further said that considering Iran-China cultural, political and economic links, the two countries should expand bilateral, regional and international cooperation.

The Chinese official also conveyed to Hashemi the oral message of his country's President Jiang Zemin to President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani

Underlining the willingness of the Chinese government to upgrade bilateral relations with Iran, Ding said that the Chinese officials are determined to fully implement the previous agreements already reached between the two countries.

Ding also held a separate meeting with Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Asia-Pacific Affairs Alaeddin Boroujerdi here Sunday.

In the meeting, Boroujerdi said, "The handover of Hong Kong is a great world event and a great success for China."

The Iranian minister also said Sino-Iranian relations were being developed in many different fields.

Ding called for a regular exchange of views between Iran and China and an end to the production of nuclear weapons.

Iran's Advisor to the Foreign Minister, Ali Khorram, and the visiting Chinese official, held first round of their talks here Saturday, discussing regional and international issues.

The Chinese official, who is here at the head of a delegation, called for a halt in production of nuclear weapons and destruction of the current stock of weapons. He said that big countries should

(Contd on Pg. 14)



TEHRAN (June 29) — Iran's First Vice President Hassan Habibi receives the written message of Moroccan King Malek Hassan to Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani. The Moroccan Ambassador to Tehran Muhammad Azerval (L), submitting the message, voiced King Hassan's willingness to enhance all-out relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran. Habibi also said Iran is ready to expand cooperation with all Muslim countries. Photo: Mojtaba Takin

Kazakhstan's Humanitarian Aid to Quake Victims Lauded

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — In a letter to the Kazakh Prime Minister Akezhan Kazhegeldin, Iran's Ambassador to Almaty Hassan Qashqavi thanked the Kazakh government for sending relief aid to the victims of the killer quake which hit southern Khorasan on May 10.

Iranian diplomat said that the aid rendered by the Kazakh government, despite the country's economic hardship, proved solid friendly relations between the two countries, IRNA reported.

A killer earthquake with a magnitude of 7.1 degrees on the Richter scale hit Qaen and Birjand, in the northeastern Province of Khorasan, killing more than 1,500 and injuring 2,300 others. The quake also caused massive degree of destruction making thousands homeless.

The Kazakh government sent some 195 tons of flour to the survivors of the quake through the Islamic Republic's Red Crescent Society two weeks ago.

190 kg of Drugs Confiscated

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The Law Enforcement Forces of Mazandaran Province announced on Sunday that some 190 kg of narcotics have been confiscated during the past few days in the northern Iranian province.

Illicit drugs were confiscated during routine checks of passing by vehicles in the cities of Minoudasht, Gonbad, Gorgan, Sari, Babol, Aliabad, Tonekabon and Noshahr or from smugglers' houses. Six vehicles were also confiscated in this connection, an IRNA report said.

Another IRNA report from Kerman, quoted the Deputy Commander of the Law Enforcement Forces Brigadier General Ansari as saying on Saturday that the three eastern provinces of Sistan-Baluchestan, Kerman and Khorasan, accounted for over 72 percent of drugs seized in the country during the past 15 months.

Ansari assessed the operations conducted by the said base as constructive, saying that Mersad had succeeded in fighting drug traffickers, building embankments and sealing passes on the sensitive eastern borders of Iran.

هكذا من الأصل

Rafsanjani Lauds the Judiciary, Judiciary Honors Him


Photo: Mojtaba Takin

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani addressed a gathering of the Justice Ministry here yesterday and received an award from the head of the judiciary, Ayatollah Yazdi for eight years of service to the Islamic Republic as president.

The president also honored the founder of the republic's Judiciary, the martyred Ayatollah Beheshti and said that he left us with the framework of a strong, capable, fair justice system and his work and efforts will not be forgotten.

President Rafsanjani then turned to the support of the Supreme Leader, the government and the people and all who have given their best efforts to the smooth functioning of a strong judiciary:

"The fundamental changes which we have witnessed since the revolution in our judiciary and the implementation of Islamic laws in our country is a cause for immense pride for our country and those who strive for the betterment of the system."

The president once more emphasized the importance of the justice system in the society and said that even more effort is needed to correct any shortcomings the system might have in addressing the needs of the country in achieving a fair, equitable judiciary.

The president then reminded the gathering that "Justice delayed is justice denied," and said that even more appropriations are needed so that all tools necessary for administration of justice is provided to the judges and all who toil for a better society in the judicial system.

"We need to speed up the hiring of more highly trained personnel for this important task and make sure that they are provided with salaries which make them immune to temptations, and are able to focus all the energy and time on the important task entrusted to them," the president exhorted.

He also talked about the need for even more work on improving the conditions in the country's jails and prisons in accordance with the laws of Islam. The president then told the gathering that considering the fact that most of Iran's prisoners are drug dealers, addicts, and members of the international mafia, the Islamic Republic has invested great amounts of funds in combating the blight of narcotics and is trying to find the best tools suitable for resisting the evil of these "merchants of death".

"We need highly trained people, who are fair and of the best caliber the society has to offer to sustain our justice system, who are also aware that politics should never enter the judiciary's work, and that slogans have no place in our justice system," The president added.

He also said that the judiciary should be fully aware that given the importance of the active participation of the private sector in the economy, unnecessary laws or obstacles should not be placed in the way of private enterprise and obversely the hoarders of public wealth should be dealt with swiftly and strongly.

President Rafsanjani also awarded the heads of the Judiciary in the provinces of Khorasan and Gilan certificates honoring their work as model judges.

Iran's Minister of Justice, Shushtari, also addressed the gathering before the president and by giving some figures tried to put into perspective the notable increase in the number of personnel and judges in the last eight years:

"In the last eight years we have established 116 judicial units, which comprise 3034 civil courts and the appeals court have jumped to 196, which is due to the hard work of numerous officials and judges. We have also hired and trained further 2500 new judges and some 5000 new personnel and have had our appropriations increased by 100 percent during this time."

Funeral Services Will Be Held for 2,000 Martyrs of War

TEHRAN — Funeral services will be held simultaneously nationwide on Friday for 2,000 martyrs of the sacred defence, the deputy chief of the armed forces command headquarters for cultural affairs announced on Sunday.

The remains belong to those who attained martyrdom during operations code-named Karbala 4,5 and 8, Beit Al-Moqaddas, Badr, Kheibar, Ramadhan, Moharram, Moslem ibn Aqil, preliminary Valfajr, Valfajr 1 and 8, and Fath 5 and during enemy attacks on Majnoon and Shlamcheh. (IRNA)

Mobutu "Well" and Convalescing After Operation

RABAT — The ailing former leader of Zaire, Mobutu Sese Seko, was "well" on Sunday after an operation for serious bleeding complications and was convalescing, attended by some of his family, said a doctor at the hospital in Rabat.

"He is well for the moment," the doctor at Rabat's Avicenne Hospital told Reuters by telephone.

Asked how long the 66-year-old former leader was expected to stay in hospital, the doctor said: "We can't say at this stage."

He said "about 10 of his family" were with Mobutu at the hospital. (Reuter)

G-8's Stand Towards Iran

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The Twenty Third Summit of Industrialized Countries wound up recently in Denver, the United States, and included a clause in its final declaration against the Islamic Republic of Iran. The anti-Iran clause asks all governments not to enter into military cooperation with Iran and calls on Iranian officials to take up an stand against terrorism.

What follows are excerpts from Persian-language daily *"Jumhoori-e Eslami"* regarding the G-8 summit in Denver:

The daily evaluates the G-8 summit as being under the influence of the United States and refers to the U.S. failure in convincing the members of this group to act against Iran.

The Americans have never succeeded in going beyond slogans in making the G-8 to take up positions against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The fact is that each of the G-8 members have regulated their policy in the face of the Islamic Republic of Iran based on their own national interests.

Jumhoori-e Eslami's commentator writes that the inveterate and continuous enmity of the United States government with the Islamic Republic of Iran, the differing viewpoints of European countries in the face of the Persian Gulf's strategic region, and the awareness of these countries of the constant efforts of the White House in intensifying hostility against Iran have been among factors triggering differences among European members of the group with the United States in dealing with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The daily writes that the failure of the ceaseless efforts of the White House in trying to prevent Russia from continuing peaceful nuclear cooperation with Iran, and the U.S. defeat in winning the support of European countries to join the economic embargo against Iran are two glaring examples of the disregard of G-8 states for the U.S. pressures, impositions and hegemony.

Jumhoori-e Eslami focuses on the root cause of the U.S. failure and writes that despite some political commonalties among the G-8 members in most cases, the interests of each individual member is regarded as more vital than the collective interests. For some of these countries, collective interests has no place in their policies. For this reason, this group has never been able to arrive at a single viewpoint on domestic and overseas decisions.

First Ever Exhibition on Natural Catastrophes Ends Work

RASHT — An exhibition on natural catastrophes and how to cope with them, wound up here on Saturday.

The exhibit, the first of its kind, was held to mark the seventh anniversary of the devastating earthquake of Roudbar-Zanjan (21 June 1990), which killed over 40,000 people in northwestern Iran.

On display at the week-long exhibit were first aid kits, a variety of emergency relief items, and posters of different kinds of natural disasters. Films and slides were also screened.

Statistics showed the types and methods of relief provided during the recent years in the different areas of Iran hit by natural catastrophes.

An interesting section of the fair which caught the attention of many visitors were paintings of children from areas hit by natural catastrophes. (IRNA)

OIC Jurisprudence Meet Starts Work in Jeddah

ABU DHABI — The 10th meeting of the Islamic Jurisprudence Assembly started work at the headquarters of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, today with delegations from member states including Iran in attendance.

The Iranian delegation is being led by head of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization Hojjatoleslam Mohammad Ali Taskhiri.

Iran's permanent representative to the conference, Sabah Zanganeh is also attending the five-day meeting, which will see Ulema and thinkers of various Islamic school of jurisprudence exchange views on different topics of medical ethics from the viewpoint of the Sharia.

The meeting will also review new methods of economic transactions and the approvals of the earlier seminar held in Tehran on women's role in development of Islamic societies.

The setting up of the Muslim women's international organization which was among the approvals of the OIC seminar on women's held in the Iranian capital in 1995, will be among the main topics of discussion. (IRNA)

Nigeria Calls For Expansion of Relations With Iran

TEHRAN — Iran's new ambassador to Nigeria Ghaneh Zadeh on Saturday submitted his credentials to Nigerian President Sani Abacha.

The Nigerian president at the meeting underlined further expansion of cooperation between Tehran and Lagos.

Abacha expressed hope that the mutual cooperation between the two countries would further expand in all fields. (IRNA)

Petrol Fumes Assume Dangerous Proportions in Tehran

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Tehran's Mayor Gholam-Hussein Karbaschi said here on Saturday that toxic gases in Tehran's atmosphere as a result of emissions from petrol-driven vehicles is twice the per capita amount in other developing countries.

Speaking in the opening ceremony of the International Conference on Air Pollution and the action plan for Tehran, Karbaschi said the high rate of toxic gases in Tehran's atmosphere is due to more plying on the streets by small motor-cars, IRNA reported.

He said 39 percent of transportation inside Tehran takes place by motor-cars which is a high figure compared to urban transportation in the most polluted cities of the world, such as Mexico City.

He said the studies indicated that 1.28 million tons of carbon monoxide, 17,500 tons of sulphuric dioxide, 21,000 tons of chemical particles, 105,000 tons of nitrous oxides and 115,000 tons of hyrocarbons are discharged in the atmosphere annually by exhuasts of cars plying the streets of Tehran.

Karbaschi said that annually 10 million tons of various fossil fuels are burnt by engine vehicles in Tehran which produce a total of 51 million tons of carbonated gases.

The two-day international conference on air pollution and the action plan for Tehran is being sponsored by the Tehran Manucipality in cooperation with the World Bank.

Kazakh Parliament Cancels Double-Tax System With Iran

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Kazakh Parliament approved an agreement between Iran and Kazakhstan on cancelling double-tax system in trade between the two states, it was announced in Almaty on Sunday.

Trade between Iran and Kazakhstan stood at $100 million last year up by $30 million compared with the preceding year, IRNA reported.

Kazakhstan imports food, sanitary products, household appliances and construction materials from Iran and exports ironware, color metals and raw materials to Iran.

Arab Shipping Firm Profits Dip

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - The Kuwait-based United Arab Shipping Company (UASC) announced Saturday profits of almost 70 million dollars in 1996, some 20 percent lower than a year earlier.

Net profits were 69.9 million dollars last year, while total revenues during 1996 were 634.2 million dollars, UASC said in a statement, as quoted by an AFP report from Kuwait City.

Profits in 1995 were 87.2 million dollars, although retained earnings for that year were 28.4 million dollars, after covering accumulated losses for the previous three years.

The company will distribute to its six Arab shareholders — Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates — a dividend of 49.5 million dollars, equivalent to five percent of paid up capital.

UASC said it transported 425,116 20-foot equivalent units (teus) of containerized cargo in 1996, compared with 427,094 teus the previous year.

In addition, it transported 1.559 million tons of general cargo last year, compared with 1.448 million tonnes in 1995.

Iran, Gateway to Trade With Central Asia and the Caucasus

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - The Secretary of the High Council of the Free Trade Zones of Iran, Morteza Alviri in the annual meeting of the Crans Montana Forum in Switzerland said Saturday that Iran is considered to be the gateway for trade with Central Asia and the Caucasus.

Alviri who is heading a delegation of officials from the free trade zones to the eighth annual conference added that the free trade zones in Iran have had outstanding success due to access to labor force and energy, raw material and proximity to local and regional markets and the most important of all the security of investment, IRNA reported from Vienna.

They are considered to be the most reliable and convenient route for the transit of goods to Central Asia, he told the gathering.

In his address he outlined Iran's views on investment in these zones as well as the status and laws encouraging commercial activities existing in these zones.

The four-day Crans Montana Forum is held every summer in Switzerland and representatives from the public and private sectors of different countries meet to discuss various issues primarily in the economic and cultural areas.

This year's meeting of the Crans Montana Forum began on June 26 and will continue till Sunday June 29.

India's Commerce Ministry Not to Seek Rupee Devaluation

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - The Indian Commerce Ministry will not seek devaluation of the rupee as suggested by exporters since any such measure has to be taken in the overall economic perspective, the Union Commerce Minister, B.B. Ramaiah, said yesterday.

The commerce minister's statement assumes significance in the wake of the demand from exporters that the Indian rupee be devalued as the country's exporters were at a disadvantage because competing countries were devaluating their currencies, IRNA reported.

The issue of rupee devaluation figured at the meeting of the exporters with the Prime Minister I.K. Gujral in New Delhi Thursday, but the latter did not make any commitment regarding this.

Central Bank Announces Price Indexes

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - The wholesale price index in the Iranian month of Ordibehesht, covering April 21 - May 21 1997, rose by 1.4 percent compared to the previous month and 10.1 percent to the same period in 1996.

This comes at a time when the wholesale price index during April 21 - May 21 1996 rose by 28.4 percent over the same period in 1995, IRNA reported.

In a report released by the Economic Statistics Department of the Central Bank of Iran, the consumer price and services index in the urban areas during the period under review (April 21 - May 21 1997) rose by 2.3 percent relative to the previous month and by 17.7 percent compared to the same period in 1996.

The same index registered a rise of 26.4 percent in the same period in 1996 comapared to the corresponding period in 1995.

The producers price index in Iran during the period April 21 to May 21 rose by two percent compared to the previous month and by 16.1 percent compared to the same period in 1996.

The aforesaid index showed a rise of 28.5 percent in the month April 21 to May 21 1996 compared to the same month in 1995.

The transaction of shares in the Tehran Stock Exchange during the month covering April 21 to May 21 1997 was worth Rls.174.9 billion which shows a rise of 239.1 percent compared to the previous month (March 21-April 20 1997) but a decline of 27.9 percent compared to the same period in 1996.

Iraq in Charm Offensive at Swiss Business Forum

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Iraq, seeking to escape the clutches of a U.N. embargo for its 1990 invasion of Kuwait, courted investors at a Swiss forum at the weekend on the latest leg of a charm offensive to drum up business abroad.

Iraqi President Saddam Hussein sent his leading diplomatic trouble-shooter Abdul Amir al-Anbari to the Crans Montana gathering of international business and political leaders in a ski resort high up in the Swiss Alps.

"We're on a diplomatic charm defensive," quipped Al-Anbari, Iraq's chief negotiator for December's U.N. oil-for-food deal under which Baghdad is allowed to sell up to $2 billion of oil over six months to purchase food and medicine for civilians.

"I'm here (Switzerland) to keep communication going on. I'm sometimes assigned on ad hoc missions, be it Japan or Latin America or Africa or Europe. I like my work," the Paris-based envoy told Reuters.

Oil markets have been waiting for word on the resumption of Iraq's oil sales since it got security council permission for new shipments from July 8 after approval of the second round of the oil-for-food deal, a humanitarian exception to sanctions.

Al-Anbari, now Paris ambassador to UNESCO, U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, said Iraq was ready to resume oil sales in August pending submission of its medicine and food distribution plan, likely to be ready within two weeks, and its Security Council approval.

"Everything is really in place. It depends on how cooperative the other party is," he said. If all went smoothly, "end of July, beginning of August we would resume our oil discussions...then, the shipments would start," he said.

At an earlier meeting with Western oil executives and businessmen, Al-Anbari was upbeat that foreign firms would commit themselves to developing Iraq's oilfields.

"The potential for partnership is great once sanctions are lifted," he said, playing up huge oilfield negotiations with permanent Security Council members Russia, China and France.

He said Iraq was negotiating oil production deals with Mitsubishi in Japan, France's Total SA and Russia, where three firms led by Lukoil have signed a contract to develop Iraq's West Qurna field, a project that could see output from the giant reservoir reach a million barrels per day in four to six years.

"It is a public secret that we've been discussing projects with major companies. We signed agreements with major Japanese, Indian, Malaysian and Russian companies," Al-Anbari said.

Oil industry analysts say chances Baghdad might secure final signatures on foreign contracts before sanctions end look slim.

But Al-Anbari argued that economic self-interest was easing opposition to the sanctions.

"Some European companies are raising their voices loudly with the U.S.," he said. "Some are realizing that the sanctions have lost their moral and legal force after almost seven years."

"Long-term policies of some major industrialized countries may generate pressure to get oil outside the Persian Gulf where the U.S. controls the output, supply and pricing of all oil except Iran."

Iraq has been waving its oilfield potential as a card in its diplomatic drive to get the U.N. sanctions lifted and courting key U.N. Security Council members with offers of production rights in the world's second largest reserves of oil.

Iraqi oil plans envisage attracting $15 billion under foreign production sharing agreements over ten years after sanctions are lifted, helping to boost output capacity to six million bpd from a current 2.5 million bpd.

Al-Anbari told Reuters he was busy lately lobbying Security Council members to explain Iraq's problems.

"Many countries including newly-elected members of the Security Council do not comprehend its resolutions or the actions implemented by Iraq," he said.

"I go and explain things to them. That doesn't mean they'll change policy. But it's in our interests to explain what Iraq has done so far.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES

The following table shows the foreign exchange rates in rials as released by the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran on Sunday, June 29, 1997.

COUNTRY	UNIT	Floating Rates BUY	Floating Rates SELL	Export Rates BUY	Export Rates SELL
Australia	dollar	1,310	1,317	2,249	2,260
Austria	schilling	144	145	247	248
Belgium	(100) francs	4,904	4,932	8,419	8,461
Canada	dollar	1,265	1,272	2,172	2,183
Denmark	krone	265	267	456	458
France	franc	300	302	515	517
Germany	mark	1010	1016	1,734	1,743
Holland	guilder	897	902	1,539	1,547
Italy	(100) liras	103	104	177	178
Japan	(100) yen	1,542	1,551	2,647	2,660
Sweden	krone	227	229	390	392
UAE	dirham	476	479	818	820
UK	pound	2,915	2,932	5,005	5,030
U.S.	dollar	1,750	1,755	3,000	3,015

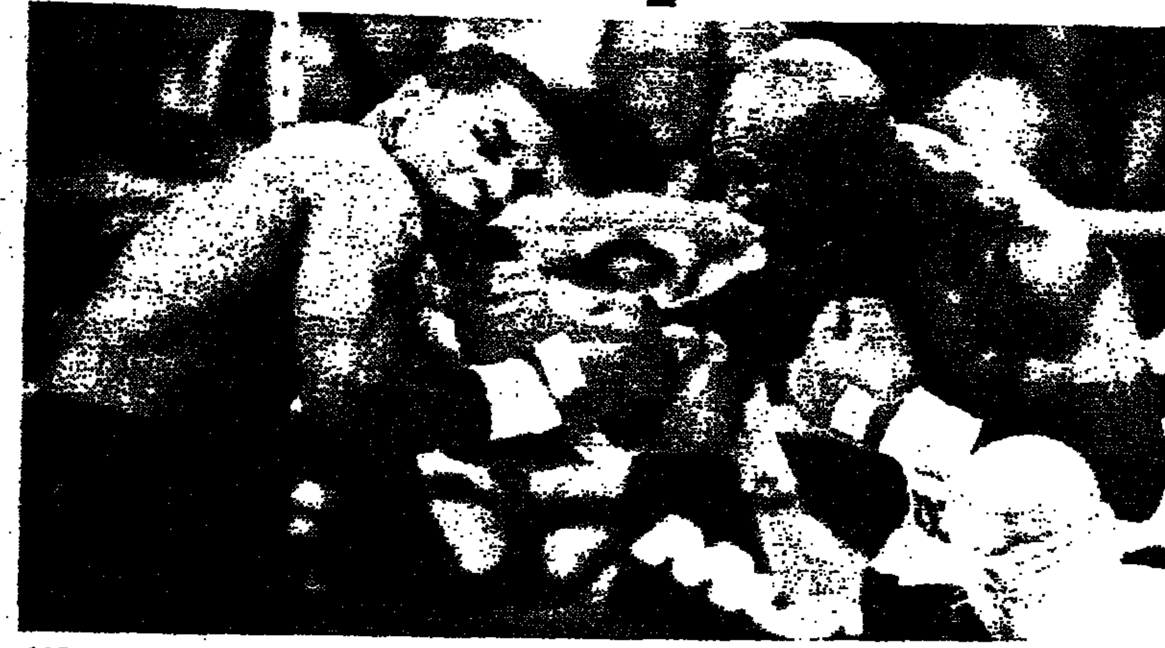




هكذا من الأصل



Tyson Disqualified



LAS VEGAS, Nevada (June 28): Former WBA heavyweight champion Mike Tyson (L) receives a right blow from challenger Evander Holyfield (R) during the first round of their fight. Holyfield won by disqualification after Tyson bit Holyfield's ears twice.

(AFP PHOTO)

LAS VEGAS, Nevada - The Evander Holyfield-Mike Tyson rematch for the World Boxing Association heavyweight title ended in a sensational style Saturday when Tyson was disqualified after three rounds for twice biting the champion's ears.

Holyfield was taken to the hospital following the bizarre turn of events and his trainer, Don Turner, said the champion was to undergo plastic surgery to reattach a section of the top of his right ear, which amazingly was recovered from the canvas after the shocking, aborted bout.

"I saw him bite his ear off," Turner said. "It was the most incredible thing that I've seen in all my years of boxing.

"I think (Tyson) should be suspended. I think he should be taken for some kind of (mental) evaluation. I think he should be fined a huge amount of money, maybe his whole purse."

The Nevada state Athletic Commission said it was withholding Tyson's $30 million purse for the fight and would hold a meeting on July 1 to decide whether to fine him or take more serious action.

Holyfield's co-trainer, Tony brooks, called for Tyson's boxing license. "They should take it away for life. It was nothing but desperation."

Added Turner: "It's a shame that things like this happen in boxing. I'm a guy that was a bad guy but I never did anything like that. That was very unprofessional. I'm just mystified by it.

Holyfield, who along with Muhammad Ali is the only three-time world heavyweight champion, earned at least $30 million for the fight.

But he must be wondering if it was worth the mutilation.

(Reuters)

Samaranch Lauds Iran's Efforts to Promote Public Sports

TEHRAN — President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Juan Antonio Samaranch has lauded the National Olympic Committee of Iran (NOCI) for its initiative to hold alethletic competitions titled "two days of Olympics" in Iran.

In a letter to the NOCI, samaranch said that the event held in line with promotion of public sports manifested the thrill of efforts by each and every Iranian.

"This is how sports serve man's coordinated development with a goal of creating a peaceful society while preserving human dignity," he noted.

Wishing success for for NOCI, Samaranch said IOC will keep on striving to attain global peace and solidarity on the threshold of the 18th International Winter Olympic Games.

(IRNA)

Argentina Oust Brazil

KUALA LUMPUR — Defending champions Argentina stopped Brazil's spectacular run in the World Youth championships with a 2-0 win in the quarter-finals on Sunday.

On a night of horror for fancied teams, France fell to Uruguay 7-6 in a dramatic penalty shootout, while Ireland stunned Spain 1-0 through a 50th-minute penalty by Trevor Molloy.

Even highly-rated Ghana struggled to beat Japan, Asia's lone survivor in the under-20 tournament, as Peter Ofori-Quaye scored a golden goal five minutes into extra-time after the teams were locked 1-1.

In Wednesday's semi-finals, Argentina take on Ireland at Kuching and Uruguay face Ghana at Shah Alam.

Brazil continued to be dogged by the Argentine Bogey as the holders scored twice in the last 10 minutes through subsitutes Lionel Scaloni and Martin Perezlindo.

Brazil had lost to Argentina 2-0 in the last youth final in Qatar two years ago and again in the South American qualifiers in February by the same margin.

But not many expected history to be repeated after toninho barroso's team notched up an incredible 25 goals in their first four matches, including 10 each against south korea and belgium.

(AFP)

Weekly Calendar for Soccer

Tehran Times Service

Monday, June 30:
Norway, Sweden - UEFA, European women's championship, through July 6.

Tuesday, July 1:
Basseterre, St. Kitts - Exhibition, St. Kitts and Nevis vs. Trinidad and Tobago.

Saturday, July 5:
Sydney, Australia - FIFA, OFC, World Cup qualifying, Oceania third-round playoff, first leg, Australia vs. New Zealand.

Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania - Exhibition, Tanzania vs. Zambia.

Sunday, July 6:
Asuncion, Paraguay - FIFA, Conmebol, World Cup qualifying, South America, Paraguay vs. Argentina.

Santiago, Chile - FIFA, Conmebol, World Cup qualifying, South America, Chile vs. Colombia.

Lima, Peru - FIFA, Conmebol, World Cup qualifying, South America, Peru vs. Bolivia.

Maracaibo, Venezuela - FIFA, Conmebol, World Cup qualifying, South America, Venezuela vs. Ecuador.

Mexico Beats Peru

ORURO, Bolivia — Luis Hernandez scored his sixth goal of the Copa America as Mexico beat Peru 1-0 in the third place play-off on Saturday.

Hernandez settled the game with an 81st minute header which also put him two goals clear of Brazil's Ronaldo as the competition's top goalscorer.

His goal apart, the game was as featureless as the high altitude desert that surrounds the mining town of Oruro. Neither team seemed remotely interested in exerting themselves in a match played at 3,700 metres above sea level.

Peru, who brought an under-23 team to the Copa to rest their top players for the world cup qualifiers, had finished their semi-final in Santa Cruz, which is just above sea level, less than 48 hours before.

Brazil meet Bolivia in Sunday's final in La Paz.

(Reuters)



ORURO, Bolivia (June 28): Mexican Luis Hernandez (2nd L) jumps for the ball in front of Peruvian Orlando Prado (# 13), during their Copa America 97 soccer game, as Mexican Javier Saavedra (1st L) and an unidentified player (1st R) look on. Mexico won the game 1-0 over Peru with a goal scored by Hernandez, placing third in the Copa America soccer championships.

(AFP PHOTO)

Davenport Bows Out

LONDON, (AFP) - Fifth-seed Lindsay Davenport of the U.S. was beaten in straight-sets by 18-year-old Denisa Chladkova of the Czech Republic in the second-round of the women's singles at Wimbledon in Sunday.

Davenport, the 1996 Olympic champion, went down 7-5, 6-2 and Chladkova now plays Radka Zrubokova of Slovakia who defeated Nicole Pratt of Australia 6-4, 7-5.

Meanwhile, South Africa's sixth-seed Amanda Coetzer was sent crashing out of Wimbledon on Sunday when she was beaten in the second-round by Canada's Patrica Hy-Boulais 6-2, 6-1.

Coetzer, a semi-finalist at the French Open earlier this month and responsible for inflicting three defeats in four meetings with former world number-one Steffi Graf, was never able to find her way against the Cambodian-born former Hong Kong Federation Cup player.

The 31-year-old by Boulais, ranked 61st in the world, now plays either Barbara Schett of Austria or Magdalena Grzybowska — the Polish player who defeated American newcomer Venus Williams on Saturday.

Meanwhile, Iva Majoli (Croatia) beat Marion Maruska (Aut) 6-3, 6-3

Pete Sampras (USA) beat Hendrik Dreekmann (Germany) 7-6 (7/2), 7-5, 7-5

WIMBLEDON, England (June 28): World number one Pete Sampras of the U.S. concentrates on his return in his match against Swede Mikael Tillstrom at the Wimbledon Championships.

(AFP PHOTO)

Weekly Sports Calendar

Tuesday, July 1:
Nancy, France - Swimming, women, FINA, water polo World Cup, through July 6.

Goteborg, Sweden - Sailing, world championship of match race sailing, through July 6.

Wednesday, July 2:
Lausanne, Switzerland - Athletics, men, women, IAAF, Grand Prix, Athletissima '97 (class I).

Thursday, July 3:
Dublin, Ireland - Golf, men, PGA European tour, Murphies Irish Open, through July 6.

Manchester, England - Cricket, England vs. Australia, third test, through July 7.

Industrialists to Thank Rafsanjani



Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The country's industrialists are due to hold a gathering here Tuesday to thank President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani for his ceaseless efforts to reconstruct the country and his resolute determination to launch development plans during his two terms in office.

In a special ceremony to be held at Azadi 12,000 seat indoor Gymnasium, the president will be awarded with a memorial statuette prepared by Iranian craftsmen.

The ceremony will provide members of different industrial unions across the country with an opportunity to directly express their feelings.

According to an informed source, President Rafsanjani will be accompanied by the president-elect Hojjatoleslam Seyed Mohammad Khatami.

The industrialists will present a report on the performance and latest achievements of the industrial sector during the past eight years to the president.

The gathering is financed by industrial unions and no governmental budget has been allocated for this purpose.

Holding such a farewell ceremony just 33 days before the end of President Rafsanjani's term in office, indicates deep gratitude of different strata to the standard-bearer of construction.

During the past three months the country's public and private sectors have held different seminars and meetings paying tribute to President Rafsanjani for his great efforts to develop the country.

The latest seminar, the Nationwide Seminar of Judges, was organized by the Judiciary on Sunday during which President Rafsanjani was awarded a memorial plaque by the head of Judiciary Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi.

During his two terms in office, President Rafsanjani spared no effort to reconstruct the country's economic infrastructures within the framework of two five-year economic, cultural development plans.

The country's industrial sector, damaged during eight years of the Iraqi imposed war, as well as management of water resources across the country were top priorities in the first and second five-year development plans.

Although attaching importance to industry and water resources has overshadowed the country's cultural and agricultural sectors, it seems that preliminary measure has been thus far taken for the development of these two sectors.

Denmark Slams U.S. Military Aid to Bosnia

COPENHAGEN — Danish Foreign Minister Niels Helveg Petersen, current chairman of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), criticized the United States on Sunday for providing military aid to Bosnia.

"The U.S. policy is really unwise and increases the risk for a new war," Petersen told the Danish daily *Jyllands-Posten*.

Washington and its European partners have long been at odds over America's insistence that Bosnia's fledgling armed forces should be given arms and assistance to match the military muscle of neighboring Serbia and Croatia.

European critics say the U.S.-led initiative will only make renewed war more likely in the Balkans by encouraging the Muslim-led Federation to try and recapture territory lost during the 43-month war.

"It is not weapons which Bosnia needs. On the contrary, weapons assistance can give a certain desire to put the new equipment into use," Petersen added.

U.S. diplomat Robert Frowick, who heads OSCE mission in Bosnia, on Saturday urged greater vigor in the pursuit of Bosnian war criminals.

He told an international business conference in Switzerland that failure to detain them undermined the peace process and that other "creative" ways to arrest them should be found of NATO could not do the job.

(Reuter)

Row Sharpens Over Yeltsin's Plan

MOSCOW — Russian Defense Minister Igor Sergeyev accused Sunday the chairman of the Parliamentary Defense Committee, Lev Rochlin, of "calling for revolution".

Rochlin last week blamed President Boris Yeltsin for causing a crisis in the Russian Armed Forces and urged soldiers to used all legal means to oppose planned changes.

The row has erupted over Yeltsin's plans to eliminate conscription and turn the armed forces into a career force by the year 2000.

Plans for smaller armed forces should be completed by the end of July, Sergeyev said in the town of Ryasan, south of Moscow, the ITAR-TASS news agency said.

Sergeyev, who became defense minister at the end of May, told the Interfax news agency that the concept of a smaller force with increased fighting readiness was the right idea.

Rochlin, who said Yeltsin's defense plans could lead to Russia losing territory from its far east to Siberia and the Urals in the next century, was supported Sunday by former Russian security adviser Alexander Lebed.

(DPA)

Vaezi: Tajik Peace an Excellent Model for the Region

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Euro-American Affairs Mahmoud Vaezi said that the successful peace talks in Tajikistan serve as an excellent model for resolving the regional crises.

In an interview with the Persian daily *Iran* published Sunday, Vaezi expressed content with the signing of the final documents on Tajik peace in Moscow on Friday by President Emomali Rakhmonov and opposition leader Abdullah Nouri.

He added that implementation of the peace agreement requires people's prudence, self-restraint of the interested sides and vigilance of regional countries.

Vaezi also said that the observer countries should continue their efforts to restore full and comprehensive peace to the country.

Stressing that Iran will continue its special role to settle Tajikistan's problems, he said Tehran believes that relations between the Tajik government and the opposition should be based on full honesty and sincerity so that there would be no need for mediation by outside countries including Iran.

Iraq to Cut Rations Because of Oil-for-Food Delays

BAGHDAD — Iraq announced on Sunday a cut in food rations to take effect in July because of hold-ups in the delivery of supplies under the UN oil-for-food accord.

Rice rations will be reduced from 2.5 kilograms (5.5 pounds) to two kilos (4.5 pounds), and the ration for beans from one kilogram (2.2 pounds) to 500 grams (1.1 pound), the Commerce Ministry said.

It said the cause was U.S. delays on authorizing rice imports to Iraq under the oil-for-food deal and the Turkish incursion into the Kurdish north of the country that has disrupted supplies.

But rations on flour, sugar and vegetable oil will be unaffected.

Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz on Thursday denounced the United States for allowing the UN humanitarian deal with Baghdad to be reduced to "oil for nothing."

The deal — under which Iraq has been allowed since December to resume limited oil exports — is an exemption to the UN sanctions imposed in 1990 following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

"The oil has been sold, the food and medicine have not yet been reached, so now it could be described as a deal 'oil for nothing' as far as Iraq is concerned," he said after a meeting with UN Secretary General Kofi Annan.

(AFP)

Palestinians Protest Israeli Policies

BAIT-UL-MOQADDAS — Palestinians demonstrated on Sunday outside the walls of Bait-ul-Moqaddas' Old City and shops closed in an organized protest at Israeli tax raids in Arab East Bait-ul-Moqaddas.

"(The policy) has weakened the economy of this city," said Faisal al-Husseini, in charge of Palestinian affairs in East Bait-ul-Moqaddas.

"No services, no rights, no taxes," he said.

The protests are the Palestinians' latest weapons in an economic war they say Israel launched to drive them out of East Bait-ul-Moqaddas, captured by Israel in the 1967 Middle East war and annexed in a move not recognized by the international community.

More than 100 Palestinians, led by Husseini, staged a protest sit-in on the steps of the Old City's Damascus gate carrying banners and shouting slogans condemning Israeli measures against Arabs in the holy city.

"Israel's taxation policy means transfer" and "confiscation of identification cards and closures are illegal", read the banners carried by demonstrators who shouted "God Is Great" and "Jerusalem (Bait-ul-Moqaddas) is the Palestinian Arab capital." Israeli soldiers and police stood above the protesters and watched.

(Reuter)

Yilmaz Gets Boost as More Deputies Abandon Ciller

ANKARA — Two more deputies resigned from Turkey's outgoing Islamic-led coalition early Sunday, further boosting the strength of the secular camp in Parliament, the Anatolia news agency reported.

Evren Bulut from the True Path Party of outgoing Foreign Minister Tansu Ciller defected overnight and said he was joining the conservative Motherland Party of Mesut Yilmaz, who has been charged with forming a new government.

Another deputy from True Path, Ali Gunaydin, resigned on Sunday morning.

In the space of three days, the coalition has lost its majority in Parliament as eight deputies have jumped ship from Ciller's party.

Yilmaz is close to forming a government of non-Islamist parties led by his Motherland Party that would exclude both the Islamists and Ciller, his bitter rival for the leadership of Turkey's traditionalist right.

The coalition will now only be able to muster only 270 deputies in the 550-seat assembly. The overall majority in votes is 274, as two seats are vacant and the Parliament speaker is not allowed to vote.

With the latest defections and the support of independents, Yilmaz could, in theory, call on 278 deputies to back him.

The defections of two True Path deputies on Saturday followed that of four party colleagues on Friday and one from the pro-Islamist Welfare Party of outgoing Premier Necmettin Erbakan.

Two True Path deputies resigned on Wednesday and Thursday. Parliamentary sources have said more resignations from the coalition parties were likely.

It was not immediately clear whether all of them would vote for Yilmaz.

Ciller's party has lost a total of 34 deputies since legislative elections in December 1995, most of them in disgust at her coalition with Welfare, whom she had previously dismissed as more dangerous than Kurdish separatists.

(AFP)

Fighting in Republic of Congo Continues Despite Announcement of Peace Plan

BRAZZAVILLE, Republic of Congo — Mortar and gun fire rang out over Brazzaville Sunday, despite an earlier announcement that a peace agreement had been struck.

The fighting appeared to be centered on the airport and on downtown Brazzaville, as it has for the last several days. The airport north of downtown is crucial to bringing in supplies and possible reinforcements.

Both President Pascal Lissouba and former dictator Denis Sassou-Nguesso have claimed control of the airport in recent days.

Valentine Olezzongo, a spokesman for Sassou-Nguesso, said Saturday that the government had retreated to one end of the runway, while Sassou-Nguesso's militia held the control tower and an adjacent building that until last week had been the headquarters of a French military evacuation team.

The French pulled out after helping nearly 6,000 foreigners flee the Republic of Congo's civil war.

(AP)

gional stability, security and tranquility, he stressed that interests of regional countries will be provided only through non-interference of foreign powers.

Iran's ambassadors and representatives to different Persian Gulf countries including Iraq, Yemen, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Bahrain are attending the four-day seminar.

The seminar is aimed at reviewing further promotion of bilateral and regional as well as economic, political and cultural relations between Iran and eight Persian Gulf littoral states.

(IRNA)

(Contd From Pg. 1)

MOST...

ing normalization with Israel and regional cooperation.

The Arab League meeting of foreign ministers in March agreed to freeze steps taken towards establishing normal ties with Israel.

(Reuter)

(Contd From Pg. 2)

HASHEMI...

share the responsibility to achieve that end.

"Certain countries interfere in the political affairs of other countries through the sale of arms," Ding said adding that however, they try to prevent other countries from exporting their weapons. Such a measure can be interpreted as the practice of a double standard policy, he noted.

On the issue of human rights, he pointed out that both the Islamic Iran and China should cooperate closely and concentrate their efforts on human rights issues at international fora.

Expounding on the policy of Iran on honoring the human rights, Khorram said that based on its ideological values, the Islamic Republic of Iran is a propounder of human rights and that both the government and nation work together to safeguard those rights.

The Iranian and Chinese officials will hold second round of talks to exchange views on different issues including the promotion of Tehran-Beijing bilateral relations.

(Contd From Pg. 2)

MISUARI...

and engineering potentials, Boroujerdi voiced Iran's readiness to implement various projects in Mindanao region.

With respect to its potentials, Iran can provide Muslims in Southern Philippines with technical and vocational training, Boroujerdi said.

(Contd From Pg. 1)

HONG KONG...

twilight years of British rule.

It plans to install an appointed provisional legislature on Tuesday until new elections are held — under new election rules that are still to be announced.

The new government will also, at China's behest, introduce laws curbing freedom of association and assembly, and it plans to make activities that "endanger national security" a crime.

(Reuter)

(Contd From Pg. 1)

LEVY...

Levy, along with Defense Minister Itzhak Mordechai, is concerned about the planned appointment of Ariel Sharon to the post of finance minister and membership of the inner security Cabinet.

The crisis eased last week after Levy threatened his resignation, but resurfaced following reports that Ariel Sharon had met without Levy's knowledge with Abu Mazen, the second in command of the Palestinian Authority.

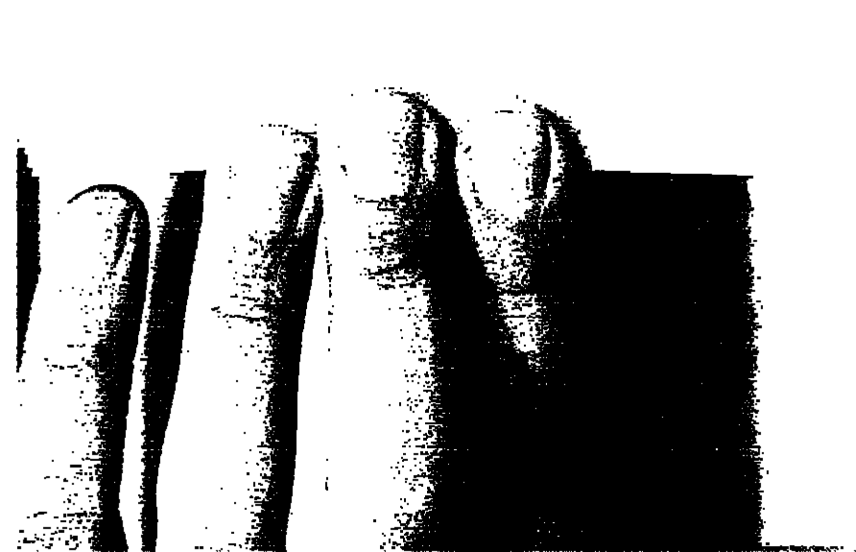
The meeting which took place 12 days ago at Sharon's southern Israeli farm exposed deep differences in approach between the two politicians, who nevertheless said they intended to meet again, reports said Sunday.

(DPA)

(Contd From Pg. 1)

REGIONAL...

Calling for collective efforts and cooperation to maintain re-





هكذا من الأصل

Al — Turabi on Islamic Revival

5- Knowledge of an Islamic Leader

Part 5

Among the companions of the prophet (S) there were no people who were identified as Mojtaheds or ulema (scholars). There were scholars and others, but there was not a class of ulema and the others only laymen. Mojtahed only means you exercise intensively your brain. The word comes from the Arabic word 'Johd' (effort). So if you exert your mental effort to understand Islam, you have become a Mojtahed. That does not mean you have to be come dependent on others. You are not a good economist if you are dependent on others to supply you with money, you will become dormant and ultimately you do not mean much. Like someone who worked and therefore he gained wealth. That is mental work also. So, whether I was an early Muslim by descent or I later converted to Islam, if I started exploiting all my knowledge in the service of Allah, trying to read the Qoran and sunna and relating all knowledge that is united in religion, I can become a better Mojtahed than some people who know the Book by heart. Whether someone graduates from the so-called secular university in the West or from a traditional religious school, in neither case can he compete with Mojtaheds as a Muslim unless, in the former case, he supplements his secular knowledge with a knowledge of Islam and, in the latter case, he supplements his traditional religious knowledge with a knowledge of life and of the world around him. And if he argues with socialists, with democrats, and with others, he knows who he is talking to and he knows exactly how to address him. Fortunately, I happened to be one. My father used to teach me traditional knowledge. He was the best scholar in the country then. And I also studied other subjects. From my early childhood, both types of knowledge were integrated into my soul. I think unity of God means unity of education. System of education should not be separated. It is like separating politics and religion. Religion is all our life. There cannot be religious schools, as we call them, because it implies that other schools by definition are not religious, they do not believe in God. It means we have separated our souls, we have divided ourselves. In this country, for example, all the faculty of medicine is a religious faculty. We are pursuing knowledge of our divine laws, which you call laws of nature. With divine laws you should simultaneously know the divine modern laws addressed to human conduct. With both of them, you become a pious doctor. Knowledge should be united, with no division. Life should be united, no government over here and church over there, like in the West. Everything should be united if we are unitarians, if we believe in one God.

It is quite true that if there is freedom of property, some people get richer than others. In the sports contests, some athletes run faster than others. If they swim, some are better swimmers. It is all like that. The life is always like that. And this is a test by God when someone who leads, he will get proud and monopolize everything. this is a test by God, I mean. So, with Ijtihad as well, there can be better Mojtaheds and there are different levels. It has to be like that. We do not want a separate class isolated. We do not want a separate class of rich people, no classes. And no classes of Knowledge, no classes of power, no classes of wealth. But there is someone who is very poor and someone who is very rich and there is a range of levels. Someone who is very ignorant and someone who is very knowledgeable and Mojtahed, but there should be a range. All aspects of life are religious. A Mojtahed should spread his education so that most of it is shared with others. And there are, for example, scholars who are just below him, there are hundreds, and those who are a little bit below, there are thousands, that is the best way. But, of course, there are always different degrees, and the people may always believe that someone is the best scholar, like in other societies. In the West, for example, there are a few scholars in economy who dictate and determine everything, but they are very great economists of course. But every company has its own expert. There are people who, comparatively, weigh much more than others. But there may be very few of them, actually. Even the Holy Prophet (S) used to consult with the people. And once he asked them, "How should we call for prayer?" He left it to the people. And someonw proposed something, Azan. And God told him again and again in the Qoran. So the Holy Prophet (S) used to consult with people and advise them this way because he wanted to spread the Qoran. And many people learned the Qoran by heart close to him. Four people followed him immediately. And then hundreds of thousands behind them. And many of the companions of the Holy Prophet (S) were good scholars. Comparatively, they were different of course. That is exactly how it should happen. All these masses of the Muslims now need kinds of knowledge about Islam. If you spread this current, many people would come very active. There will be thousands of Mojtaheds rising here and there in different aspects of life.

(To be contd)

Leadership Shuffle Key to Reform Drive in Vietnam

HANOI— The imminent departure of Vietnam's ageing president and prime minister from the political stage has quickened debate about who will replace them and whether younger blood will bring new impetus to the flagging drive for reform.

Secrets are always closely guarded in Hanoi's arcane corridors of power. So it is possible that the communist party has already settled the question of who will succeed President Le Duc Anh and prime minister Vo Van Kiet.

But Vietnam-watchers believe that senior members of the elite politburo — representing the myriad voices of conservatives, reformers, the military and middle-of-the-road technocrats — are still jostling for the plum jobs.

Contenders include defense minister Doan Khue, National Assembly Chairman Nong Duc Manh, foreign minister Nguyen



Manh Cam and deputy prime minister Phan Van Khai, although some are rumoured to be front-runners one week and others the next.

"There is so much conflicting rhetoric coming out at the moment," said one senior European diplomat in Hanoi. "It really looks like the game is not over yet."

Earlier on Monday, the party daily named the candidates who will stand for election to the National Assembly next month.

Anh, a conservative army general who suffered a stroke just before he turned 76 last year, and reform-minded Kiet, 74, were not in the nationwide line-up.

Although it was not stated anywhere in the country's media, that means they will step down when the new assembly meets in September because, constitutionally, the president and prime minister must be members of the legislature.

The same rule does not apply to the secretary general of the party, who forms a collective triumvirate with the president and prime minister.

However, party chief Do Muoi did not figure among the candidates either, a move that many believe could spell his early departure and a clean sweep for the leadership troika.

Muoi, 80, is seen as an ideological balance between Anh and Kiet and the three men come from the distinctly different north, central and southern regions of the country.

Unable to see eye-to-eye on another such balance at a policy-defining congress last year, the party sprang a surprise by agreeing to keep the three men in their posts.

Analysts said a similar struggle is probably going on and foreign business executives say that —just as before the party congress — ministries appear to be delaying important decisions.

That could be damaging for Vietnam, where a protracted focus on internal political issues over the past two years is already seen as having seriously braked the reform process.

"At the moment they're still maneuvring," said one political analyst at a Western embassy. "The message seems to be that they will go for continuity, with various flavourings of tightening state control and moving forward with reform." (Reuter)

Tokyo Poll to Test Japan's Political Parties

TOKYO— Campaigning began in Tokyo on Friday for local government polls next month which will be Japan's biggest vote this year and a litmus test of party popularity ahead of parliamentary elections due in 1998.

The contest for 127 seats in the Tokyo metropolitan assembly representing Tokyo's 23 inner-city boroughs, suburban municipalities, rural districts and outlying Pacific islands will be closely scrutinized for what it says about voter mood in the country's largest city.

A total of 264 candidates are running in the elections. Tokyo has 9.57 million eligible voters.

Past Tokyo assembly elections, held every four years, have served as a barometer of political sentiment. The next national-level elections are due to be held in July 1998 for half of the 252 seats in parliament's upper house, a less influential chamber than the lower house.

The July 6 election, however, is likely to be less a referendum than a reflection of the turmoil in national politics since the last Tokyo assembly was elected in 1993, analysts said.

The 1993 Tokyo assembly contest was followed by a parliamentary rebellion and election in which the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) was driven from power for the first time since 1955.

Japan was subsequently ruled by a series of awkward coalitions led by five prime ministers, the latest of whom, the LDP's Ryutaro Hashimoto, took office in January 1996 and looks set to serve until the end of the decade.

A three-party alliance of Hashimoto's LDP, the social democrats and the small Sakigake party at the national level is not matched in the Tokyo metropolitan and other local governments, where the parties are rivals or aligned with other groups.

The fallout from the fluid national alliances has been a steady decline in voter turnout in all elections and a rise, to above 50 percent of all voters, in the percentage of the electorate without any party affiliation.

Disaffection with party politics helped popular comedian Yukio Aoshima to the Tokyo governorship in April 1995. The populist Aoshima ran as an independent and beat party-backed rivals on pledges to tackle corruption and curb spending, among them a huge exposition that would have run this year.

But after a strong start, Aoshima has seen his popularity wane to the point where only 12 percent of tokyo voters surveyed by the Tokyo Shimbun, a local daily, say they would support a re-election bid when his term ends in 1999.

(Reuter)

New York Funeral Service for Widow of Black Leader

NEW YORK—Between 2,000 and 3,000 thousand people gathered here Friday for the funeral of Betty Shabazz, the widow of slain black leader Malcolm X who died Monday of complications from burns.

"Our sister Betty Shabazz died by burning. May Allah forgive the person who did that," said the Imam of the Islamic cultural center in Manhattan during the service broadcast live by local television.

The funeral included prayers in English and readings from the Koran as well as a eulogy by New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani. Boxing legend Muhammad Ali and former New York City mayor David Dinkins were among the prominent African-Americans in the audience.

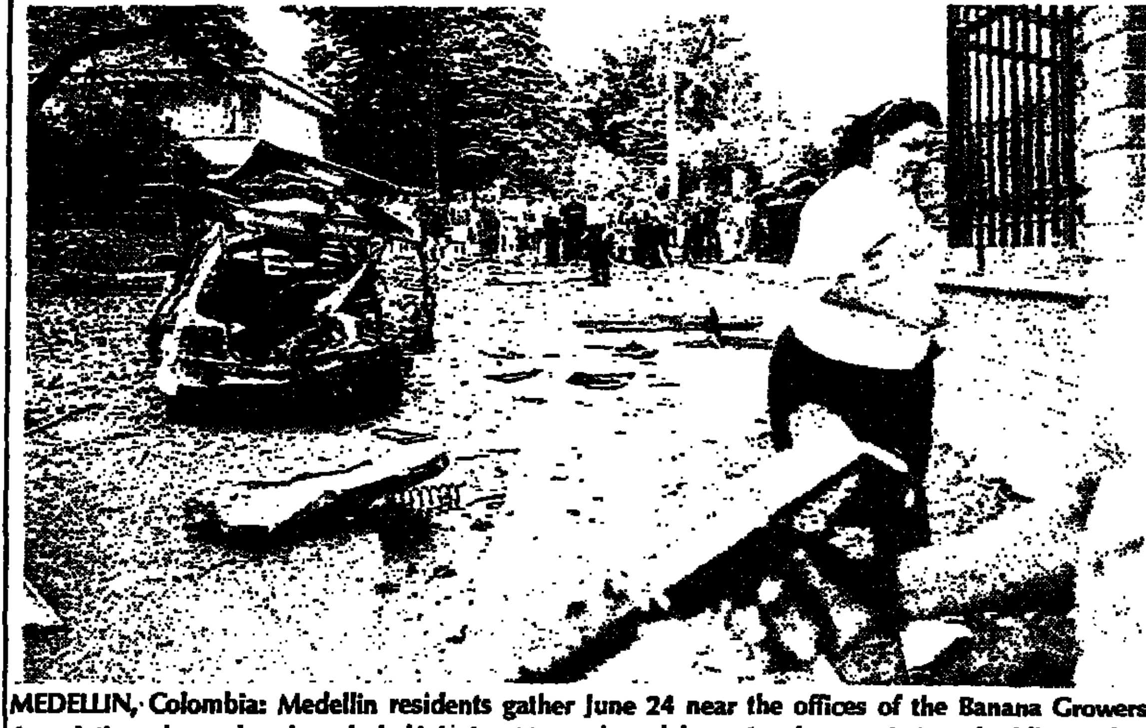
Shabazz' 12-year-old grandson, Malcolm Shabazz, is suspected of having sparked the deadly fire at her apartment June 1. He reportedly was angry at being forced to live with his grandmother while his mother stayed in Texas.

The boy is being held in a juvenile facility outside New York and has not been formally charged. As a minor under age 13, he faces a maximum sentence of 18 months in jail.

On Wednesday and Thursday, thousands of people paid homage to Shabazz at the same funeral home where her slain husband's body had been taken some 32 years ago.

Shabazz is set to be buried in Hartsdale outside New York City, next to her husband, Malcom X, who was shot dead May 21, 1965 in what was believed to have been part of a dispute within the radical Nation of Islam.

(AFP)



MEDELLIN, Colombia: Medellin residents gather June 24 near the offices of the Banana Growers Association where a bomb exploded injuring 11 people and damaging the association's building. Police official said witnesses reported two men in a motorcycle threw the bomb which landed under a parked car and exploded. Three of the injured were officials of the association. (AFP PHOTO)

"Fatty Patty" Leaves Hong Kong With Last Secret

HONG KONG — Hong Kong's last British Governor Chris Patten was Sunday preparing to leave the territory with one last secret intact — his weight.

"The very first thing I intend to do is stop eating," he said when asked if he wanted to become prime minister after ending his five-year stint after Hong Kong reverts to Chinese sovereignty.

"I've spent most of the last two months having farewell lunches and dinners and I'm starting to swell up like a great sort of melon," he said. (AFP)

Last British Couple Marries in Colonial HK

HONG KONG — A couple who came to Hong Kong after backpacking across Asia on Sunday became the last Britons to marry before the change of sovereignty.

Simon Vallance and Jeanette Hegerty tied the knot in a 15-minute ceremony late Sunday, the last in a list of 174 people who married in the final registry office ceremonies under British rule.

The chinese calendar lists the day as an auspicious one for marriage. (AFP)

May Election Set for Chinese-Ruled Hong Kong



HONG KONG, Hong Kong (June 28): Visitors are delighted by the newly lit display of huge dragon at the Kowloon district in Hong Kong. Hong Kong has been spruced up for the historic handover ceremony to be held June 30 marking the end of 156 years of British rule at the stroke of midnight and what Beijing views as reunification with the Chinese motherland. (AFP PHOTO)

HONG KONG - On the eve of Chinese rule Hong Kong's future Chief Executive Tung Chee-Hwa on Sunday set a timetable for elections and China's President Jiang Zemin pledged to uphold human rights and freedom.

Tung told visiting Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer that elections for a new legislature would be held next May, Downer told reporters.

The shipping magnate chosen by Beijing to bridge the handover after 156 years of British colonial rule had earlier promised a vote within a year. But he had not named the month.

"Mr Tung gave me a guarantee that those elections would take place... and he expected the elections would take place in May of next year," Downer said.

Hong Kong's democratically-elected Legislative Council. will be replaced hours after the midnight Monday (1600 GMT) handover with a provisional legislature appointed by Beijing.

Jiang vowed at a ceremony in Beijing's Great Hall of the People to implement strictly promises China made under a 1984 agreement handing Hong Kong back to Chinese rule.

"We will firmly uphold the principles of 'one country, two systems' and 'Hong Kong people governing Hong Kong' as well as a high degree of autonomy," Jiang was quoted as saying by the official Xinhua news agency.

China would "safeguard the Hong Kong residents' rights and freedoms in accordance with the law". (Reuter)

Voting in Albania Gets Off to Good Start

TIRANA — Voting in troubled Albania got underway on Sunday with officials reporting encouraging turnout in several parts of the country though isolated problems had emerged in some areas

Polling booths in Tirana opened on time early morning and Albania's two main political leaders each cast their votes proclaiming that Sunday's vote was an important turning point for the country.

"These elections are very important for the integration of Albania into Europe, something to which she must give an added push," President Sali Berisha told reporters after casting his vote.

His words were echoed by his arch rival Socialist Party chief, Fatos Nano, who voted in another part of the city one hour later.

"This is a new start for the country, a new future. Be careful, we are coming to Europe," Nano said after voting in a rundown school building in the center of the capital.

Meanwhile, a group of armed men barged into a polling station in western Albania, seized ballot papers and began burning them, officials said Sunday.

The incident took place half an hour after a polling station in the village of Rushbull 25 kilometers (15 miles) west of Tirana opened at 7:00 a.m. (0500 GMT), Albanian officials quoted by a local radio station said.

A senior French officer serving with the multinational force in Albania confirmed the incident stating that French soldiers went to the polling station soon afterward and found Albanian police dealing with the situation. (AFP)

Japan Murder Suspect, 14, Linked to Other Attacks

KOBE, Japan — A 14-year-old Japanese schoolboy who has admitted murdering and beheading an 11-year-old acquaintance because he hated his school may also have carried out knife attacks on two schoolgirls, police said on Sunday.

"We are investigating a link but have not yet confirmed the connection between the two incidents," a police spokesman said.

The two schoolgirls, aged nine and 10, were stabbed in the same neighborhood about two months earlier, and one of them died.

NHK television quoted a prosecutor as saying that the boy killed his 11-year-old acquaintance "because he felt resentment against the school he has been going to".

In a letter sent to a local newspaper 10 days after the grisly crime on May 24, the killer blamed Japan's authoritarian education system.

"I am not forgetting revenge for the compulsory education that has produced me as an invisible existence and on the society that has produced this compulsory education," the rambling note read.

The suspect, who has not been identified, was arrested on Saturday night. He was taken to the local prosecutor's office under heavy police protection on Sunday for questioning. (Reuter)

Muslim Leader Arrested, Tension in Indian City

NEW DELHI — A prominent Shia Muslim leader was Sunday arrested in the northern Indian city of Lucknow, sparking sporadic protests, the United News of India (UNI) reported.

Maulana Kalbe Jawaad was taken into custody and immediately flown to a neighboring town in the state of Uttar Pradesh state, the news agency said.

Maulana Jawaad had been spearheading a campaign to overturn a 20-year official ban on an annual religious procession by Shia Muslims.

The campaign sparked violence last week in Lucknow, the Uttar Pradesh capital, forcing the authorities to impose a curfew in Muslim-majority areas following clashes between Muslims and police.

UNI said as news of Maulana Jawaad's arrest spread, tension gripped the curfew-bound districts. Shias were reportedly "coming out (of their homes) in defiance ... to protest against the arrest."

It quoted "unconfirmed reports" as saying the police fired warning shots in the air and used batons to disperse protesting Shia Muslims. The crowds reportedly attacked the police with stones. (AFP)

Three Die in Kashmir Blast

SRINAGAR, India — Three people were killed Sunday when a powerful explosion rocked a five-story complex housing legislators and their families in this summer capital of Kashmir, police and witnesses said.

Witnesses said some windows were blown out by the blast, which occurred in a room occupied by a Muslim activist of Indian Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral's Janata Dal (People's Party).

The whereabouts of the activist, Abdul Khali, were not known. His wife was injured. It was not clear what caused the explosion. The Janata Dal has only a marginal presence in Kashmir.

"We are yet to determine the cause of the blast," a police officer said. "The bodies have been badly burnt." (AFP)

Navy Sinks Tiger Flotilla, Sri Lanka Toll Hits 45

COLOMBO — Navy gunboats sank a flotilla of Tamil rebel boats off Sri Lanka's north-eastern coast Sunday, killing at least 40 Tiger guerrillas as troops elsewhere killed five more rebels, officials said.

Israeli-built Dvora gunboats fired at the boats of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) off foul point in the district of Trincomalee and destroyed four boats during a four-hour battle, officials said.

"Four Tiger boats were sunk and two others were badly damaged," a local official said adding, however, that one Tiger craft managed to escape the navy onslaught.

Officials said they estimated at least 40 Tiger guerrillas were killed in the pre-dawn attack. The Defense Ministry, meanwhile said five Tigers were killed by ground troops in the northern town of Nedunkerni.

The attacks came barely two days after the navy was placed on red alert in the area amid reports that Tiger guerrillas were sending a fresh arms shipment to the island's eastern coast. (AFP)

Students Lose Out Over Exams

DIJON, France — Thirty-three French schoolchildren will have to resit crucial exams after their test papers were apparently lost by an examiner. One father said his daugher was so shocked when she heard the news that had to call a doctor.

Eight Dead in Latvian Fire Ladder Accident

RIGA — Eight children and teenagers were killed Saturday in a demonstration by firemen of a long ladder in the Latvian town of Talsi. Some 20 youngsters were in a basket which broke away from the end of the ladder 18 meters (60 feet) above the ground and crashed to earth.

Hundreds Flock to Ugandan Villager Who Claims AIDS Cure

KAMPALA — Hundreds of people are flocking to the home of Ugandan woman Berita Okwi who claims she can cure AIDS. Mrs Okwi, a widow, claimed she received a vision in a dream, telling her to prepare a cure for AIDS from leaves.

Five Dead in Australian Murder-Suicide

SYDNEY — A man slit the throats of his four daughters and alerted police before shooting himself dead in a murder-suicide Sunday at a secluded sandstone cottage just outside Hobart on the Australian holiday island of Tasmania.

Mexicans Hand Over Man on Run for 35 Years

HOUSTON — A man who escaped from prison 35 years ago has been handed over to Texas police after being captured this week in Mexico.

Ernesto Lopez, 60, had been on the run since November 1962, when he and another inmate sawed through bars at a prison in Richmond, Texas. He was serving a life sentence.

هكذا من الأصل

Iraq Says Ready to Resume Crude Sales in August

CRANS MONTANA, Switzerland — Iraq's key negotiator for a UN oil-for-food deal said on Saturday that Baghdad was ready to resume new oil sales in August under the second round of the accord approved this month if New York did not delay agreement.

Abdul Amir al-Anbari told Reuters at a business forum here that Baghdad was ready to resume crude shipments pending submission of its medicine and food distribution plan, likely to be ready within two weeks, and its Security Council approval.

"Everything is really in place. It depends on how cooperative the other party is," said the envoy.

Al-Anbari led Iraq's talks with the United Nations for December's accord allowing Baghdad to sell up to $2 billion of oil over six months to purchase food, medicine and other goods for civilians.

World oil markets have been nervously waiting for word on the resumption of Baghdad's oil sales amid lingering worries about the absence of Iraqi crude.

Iraq received Security Council approval for new oil sales starting June 8 after the approval of the second round of the accord, but has yet to resume liftings because it still has to submit a finalized aid distribution plan.

The Security Council did not approve Iraq's demand for the ceiling to be raised to $4 billion under the oil-for-food accord, which is a humanitarian exception to sanctions slapped on Baghdad for its invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

If all went smoothly, Al-Anbari said: "End of July, beginning of August we would resume our oil discussions. We'll have to sign contracts and they have to be approved by the oil experts in New York."

"Then, the shipments would start," said the soft-spoken envoy, who is Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein's diplomatic troubleshooter abroad and is now Iraq's ambassador to UNESCO, the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Al-Anbari said Iraq believed it had met the key conditions for sanctions to be removed and said he hoped the UN-imposed economic ban on its oil sales would be lifted by the end of 1997.

He dismissed recent comments by Charles Duelfer, deputy chairman of the UN Special Commission in Charge of Eliminating Iraq's Prohibited Weapons, who said Baghdad had given no sign that it would allow UN weapons teams to inspect all sites.

"The embargo should be lifted. We keep on trying," he said.

"We might say the resolution is becoming a pretext to postpone the removal of sanctions and we're not going to implement it. That could also happen. We might reject the oil-for-food renewal," he declared.

Al-Anbari said Iraq was working on its humanitarian distribution plan and that its undersecretary of health was in New York discussing the issue. Asked when the plan could be ready, he said: "I assume, ten days, two weeks."

"It seems reasonable, if we submit our aid distribution plan within ten days, I assume two weeks would be enough for the UN secretariat and the Security Council to study it. That would add up to a month."

(Reuter)

Jordan PM Supports Middle East Economic Summit

TUNIS — Jordan's Prime Minister Abdul-Salam al-Majali on Saturday vowed support to a planned Middle East and North Africa economic summit in November to be attended by Israel despite criticism from several Arab countries.

"By attending, we will be able to promote our rights particularly on the economic, water and refugees issues," Majali told a press conference at the end of a three-day visit to Tunisia.

Qatar plans to hold the summit, part of the Middle East peace multilateral talks, but the move was criticized by several Arab countries who promote the boycott because of the freeze in Israeli-PLO peacemaking following Israel's groundbreaking in March on a new Jewish settlement in Arab East Jerusalem.

Syria, Egypt and six Persian Gulf Arab states meeting in the Syrian resort of Latakia on Thursday made an indirect criticism of Qatar's plan to hold the summit.

(Reuter)

Hong Kong Holds Its Breath as Market Closes for Handover

HONG KONG — Hong Kong stocks roared to yet another all-time high on the last day of trading under the colonial era, but traders are holding their breath for the reopening of the market on Thursday under communist China's rule.

Amid suspicions that some stocks were being manipulated, feverish buying of red-chip stocks drove the Hang Seng index to a new record of 15,196.79 points last Friday, eclipsing the previous record set only a week earlier.

Red chips — companies listed in Hong Kong but controlled by mainland interests — have been the focus of investor frenzy here in the run-up to the handover, largely driven by rumors that asset injections from China will boost their value.

Buying subsided after Beijing announced guidelines on such transfers of assets on June 21, but the cooling-off was temporary and Red-Chip stocks were once again propelling the market into space by the end of last week.

Many analysts see the Red-Chip sector as heavily overbought, noting that while these stocks make up roughly 10 percent of market capitalization, they have recently accounted for about a third of all turnover.

"These gains defy all fundamental analysis of the companies' underlying earnings outlook and growth prospects," said Sean Li, Associate Director of Amsteel Securities (HK) Ltd., after last Friday's manic buying.

John Mulcahy, managing director of W.I. Carr (Far East) Ltd., part of France's Indosuez Capital Group, agreed.

"The classic valuation criteria has been thrown out of the window," he said over the weekend, the start of a five-day holiday to mark the change of sovereignty.

"Expectations have been blown up beyond reason," he said, adding that the market would suffer a "bit of a hangover effect" when it reopens.

But Mulcahy reckons the sell-off will be brief.

"There'll be an attempt to sell the market down but there's still people waiting in the wings," he said, explaining that many foreign institutional investors were still seeking to increase their exposure to China.

"We're in the early stages of an upturn in the Chinese economy. This is purely cyclical. It has nothing to do with China and it has nothing to do with Britain, although both will probably try to claim credit," he said.

For the time being, the immediate market focus is on this week's meeting of the U.S. federal reserve's policy-making open market committee and a foretaste of the new housing policies being framed by the new government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR).

Markets expect the fed to keep interest rates unchanged, but traders here are closely following the outcome, given the local currency's link to the U.S. dollar which leaves the territory — especially the overheated property market — exposed to changes.

Of more immediate concern are signs of market manipulation.

Hong Kong Securities and Futures Commission (SFC) chairman Anthony Neoh said Friday there were "symptoms of potential ramps" and that the securities watchdog was carrying out a probe.

"The law prevents me from saying which cases are being investigated," the securities watchdog chief said. But he also cautioned that the market's "very high volatility (is) by no means restricted to the Red Chips."

Neoh meanwhile said that a survey of options positions indicated the market was "not looking for a big correction" after the handover.

Neoh meanwhile said that a survey of options positions indicated the market was "not looking for a big correction" after the handover.

Regarding allegations that Beijing interests were supporting the Hong Kong market, Mulcahy noted that the Chinese Communist Party reportedly agreed two years ago to do all it could to boost stock and property prices in Hong Kong in the lead-up to the handover.

But as for direct intervention by Beijing on a daily basis, "if you look at the sheer scale, it's not possible to manipulate," he said.

Last Friday's turnover of 26 billion Hong Kong dollars ($3.4 billion), he noted, amounted to three-quarters of the total volume of $36 billion for the whole of 1984, when Hong Kong had four separate exchanges.

"The Hong Kong market is beyond the realms of manipulation," Mulcahy said.

(AFP)

Gazan Company Exports Retreaded Tires to Israel

GAZA — Palestinians once burnt old tires to protest against Israeli occupation but one Palestinian company is now refurbishing them for export to the Jewish state.

The Nabaheen industry and trading company, which runs the Matin global for tires factory for retreading entire tires in self-ruled Gaza, is the only company of its kind in either the Palestinian areas or in Israel.

Set up last year, the factory exported its first shipment of 300 retreaded tires to Israel last week.

"This is the first time we have exported to Israel," said the company's owner Jaber Nabaheen. "So far we have been selling only in the Gaza Strip and in the West Bank."

The Westernised Nabaheen, 54, worked for a United Nations agency in Vienna. Last year he built his small factory on three acres (1.4 hectares) of land near his home in the central Gaza Strip with capital of $1.5 million.

Both the house and the factory sit like an island in a sea of greenery. They are the only buildings surrounded by vast areas of cultivated land in the PLO-ruled Gaza Strip, only a few kilometers away from the border with Israel.

Nabaheen obtained a $650,000 loan from the World Bank to expand his project and set up a branch in the West Bank.

Salem Rohana, investment officer at the International Fund Corporation, a branch of the World Bank that offers loans to the private sector, said: "Nabaheen's idea is new and when we gave him the loan, we believed it could be a success in the Palestinian market."

He said the factory had passed all Israeli standard tests and was given a permit to market its product in Israel.

Foreign-Trained Workforce

Inside the clean factory, 19 Palestinians were working on sophisticated machinery imported from the United States, Italy and Portugal. Nabaheen had experts from those countries train Palestinian workers on the machinery. Raw materials are all imported from Portugal.

The word *Matin*, the factory's name, is Arabic for "strong".

Nabaheen's factory re-manufactures 4,000 car tyres and 800 large tyres for buses and trucks monthly with a six-month guarantee.

"There was a need for having a branch in the West Bank because the demand there is greater and because Israel made movement almost impossible by imposing the almost continuous closures on the Gaza Strip. Closures have also raised the cost of transportation," Nabaheen told Reuters.

Palestinians complain the closures have led to a deterioration of their ailing economy and discouraged badly needed foreign and Arab investment.

While under occupation, Palestinians complained that Israel did not improve infrastructure in Palestinian areas. Roads in those areas were so bad they damaged new cars in little time.

Nabaheen said there is a big price advantage in buying retreaded tyres.

(Reuter)

IMF Expected to Release Funds for Ukraine

KIEV — The International Monetary Fund is expected to release a desperately-needed $3 billion loan for Ukraine, even though Parliament turned down Friday two measures the IMF had stipulated.

The communist-dominated Parliament refused to accept an income tax cut from 40 percent to 30 percent or a reduction in wage-related contributions.

"Ukraine has only gone halfway," local IMF representative Patrick Lenain commented, but William Senkiw, the head in Kiev for international auditors Arthur Andersen, said the government had no choice.

Senkiw said the IMF would release the funds, although it would "make a bit of a fuss."

"It has obtained two of the fiscal reforms out of the four it was seeking," Senkiw said. "That should do for a start."

President Leonid Kuchma said the Parliament had been generous in finally approving the budget after some nine months of negotiations. It should have been passed by last January 1.

Kiev badly needs the IMF loan to launch reforms and make up arrears in paying salaries and pensions.

Lenain said the IMF was pleased that for the first time the budget did not provide for direct payments from the Central Bank to finance the deficit. Instead the funds will come from treasury bond issues and international loans.

Kiev had also managed to keep the deficit down to 5.7 percent of gross domestic product.

Revenue is estimated at 22.418 billion hryvnias ($12.31 billion) and expenditure at 28.12 billion hryvnias ($15.45 billion).

An IMF team is due here next week to examine the budget more closely and discuss the loan.

(AFP)

Yemen Oil Revenues Close to $1bn in 1996

SANAA — Yemen earned a total of $958.4 million in oil revenues in 1996, according to official statistics published in the press here Saturday.

The government daily called October 14 added that oil revenues from the first five months of 1997 stood at just over $390 million.

It said the country was producing 340,000 barrels of oil per day (bpd), and that Yemen had estimated oil reserves of 1.39 billion barrels.

Yemen's oil reserves are in the northwest Maarib region, where the U.S. company hunt produces 165,000 bpd, and Massila in the south where Oxy of Canada produces 175,000 bpd.

Around 15 foreign companies are involved in oil exploration in Yemen, one of the world's poorest countries.

(AFP)

India Executives Laugh to Beat Stress

BOMBAY — Sedate and unhurried, the executives at one of India's largest engineering firms file out of their offices and take up positions on the pavement alongside, like a flock of distracted penguins.

The stillness of the lunch hour in this dockland business district is abruptly shattered as the group breaks into a series of belly laughs.

"Ah-hah-ho-ho, ah-hah-ho-ho," they go, arms stretched up to the sky and rocking their torsos. "Ah-hah-ho-ho, ah-hah-ho-ho."

Burly labourers and brightly dressed telephone operators en route to lunch turn to stare. But the local laughter club has begun its daily work-out, and its members are oblivious to onlookers' curiosity or amusement.

Laughter Has Healing Properties

All over Bombay, groups of stressed-out people say they are discovering the healing properties of laughter as each of the city's 48 laughter clubs daily breaks into gales of mirth.

The Ballard Estate Laughter Club, which meets everyday for 15 minutes of jollies before lunch, is specifically aimed at busy executives with their noses buried in work, who cannot fit more strenuous exercise routines into their schedules.

"Everywhere else, laughter club enthusiasts are morning strollers or old people," said John Monteiro, 59, public relations manager with India's Larsen & Toubro Ltd, who thought up the lunchtime sessions.

"Office-goers are sunrise to sunset people, who never see the sunlight except on Sundays," Monteiro added with a pixyish smile. "So many people find this convenient."

He estimated that the sessions, now two months old, drew about 20 to 30 participants from offices all over the district each day, with the tally occasionally peaking at 40.

Laughter Removes Stress, Inhibitions

"It has actually helped," said advertising executive Jairam Menon, 43, who said the sessions had an overall "tonic" effect on his system. "It de-stresses you," he added. "It rids you of your inhibitions. It helps bring people together."

From the warm-up laughs, the group moves onto more complicated varieties — delicate, measured, little laughs in the exercise called "social laughter", to exercise the lower stomach, or the "silent laughter", which involves making funny faces and opening the mouth, though no sound issues forth.

Then, to exercise the lungs, there is the giant patiala laugh, a volcanic series of heaves and rumbles fuelled by a preceding large intake of breath.

"It's a catharsis," said Rosanna Da Cunha. "It refreshes you and re-energises you." Like other participants, she reported a healthy boost in appetite after each session of guffaws. "It prepares you for your meal," she added.

Dr Madan Kataria, the physician who evolved and popularized the laughter exercises on the basis of an ancient Indian yogic breathing posture, listed the health benefits.

"Laughter is an aerobic exercise where oxygen levels increase after a couple of giggles," Kataria told Reuters. "There is a greater exchange of oxygen when you laugh. It is food for the cells of your body."

Among other things, laughter therapy stimulates circulation all over the body, reduces blood pressure and peptic ulcers, remedies sleep disorders and stress syndromes, he added.

Laughter Cures Snores, Too

For those deprived of their sleep by partners' snoring, Kataria offered a solution.

"Reverse laughter, for instance, chuckling in the way that children do, is very good for the palatal muscles," he said. "It's good for people who snore, because it tightens the soft palate."

Laughter therapy had succeeded beyond his wildest expectations, Kataria said, with groups all over India cackling up a bewildering variety of new techniques each day.

"I don't know, it has become a big dictionary," Kataria said. "Two years ago, I started with two exercises only."

(Reuter)

LIMOGES, France (June 27): A French policeman looks at some of the 119 garden gnomes lined up at the police station in the central town of Aixe, near Limoges. The gnomes, worth between 20 francs (3.5 U.S. dollars) and 1,000 francs each, were found June 24 by municipal workers in nearby woods. Police suspect that the thefts are the work of the Garden Gnome Liberation Front, which favors leaving gnomes in their rightful habitat - woods.

(AFP PHOTO)

119 Garden Gnomes "Liberated" in Woods

LIMOGES, France — France's notorious Garden Gnome Liberation Front may be at it again!

Thieves stole 119 plastic and plaster gnomes from gardens in this central French city and then "liberated" them, gendarmes said Friday.

The gnomes were released in woods at Aixe, near here, police said.

They said they suspected the thefts were the work of the Garden Gnome Liberation Front, but no claim was made.

The gnomes, worth between 20 francs (four dollars) and 1,000 francs each, were found last Tuesday by accident by municipal workers and were taken into the care of the Aixe gendarmerie, which has already handed some back to their owners.

The front in favour of leaving gnomes in their rightful habitat — woods — made headlines in France last summer when a group of masked members took TV crews into a forest in the dead of night to film the liberation of scores of gnomes it said were being "ridiculed" by being placed in gardens.

(AFP)

Supreme Court Rules Against Medically Assisted Suicide

WASHINGTON — Ending a bitter and empassioned debate, the U.S. Supreme Court issued a landmark ruling Thursday that terminally ill patients had no right to medically assisted suicide.

The court asserted the "right" to assistance in committing suicide "is not a fundamental liberty," adding that "this ... 'right' has no place in our nation's traditions, given the country's consistent, almost universal, and continuing rejection of the right, even for terminally ill, mentally competent adults."

In two separate rulings, the court drew a distinction between medically assisted suicide and other efforts to end the lives of the terminally ill.

"Everyone ... is entitled if competent to refuse unwanted lifesaving medical treatement" but "no one is permitted to assist a suicide," Chief Justice William Rehnquist wrote in one of the two rulings.

"The distinction between letting a patient die and making that patient die is important, logical, rational and well established."

The court upheld laws passed by 35 U.S. states in the last few years forbidding doctors from helping terminally ill patients die.

It also overturned two appeal court rulings in the states of Washington and New York earlier this year which said that laws banning medically assisted suicides were unconstitutional.

Only the state of Oregon authorized medically assisted suicide in 1994, with several appeals against the legislation currently going through the courts.

U.S. President Bill Clinton welcomed the decision, describing it as a "victory for all Americans".

"The decision is a victory for all Americans. It prevents us from going down a very dangerous and troubling path on this difficult and often agonizing issue," he said.

"I have always expressed my strong opposition to physician-assisted suicide. I believe that it is wrong and have always believed it to be wrong."

The debate on medically assisted suicide has raised the same passion and intensity among Americans as that on abortion, which the Supreme Court legalized in 1973.

A key figure in the debate is Jack Kevorkian, a 68-year-old former Michigan pathologist dubbed "Dr. Death" who has been linked to more than 50 deaths since june 1990.

Kevorkian, whose medical license was revoked in November 1991 after he aided in three suspected suicides, has been acquitted in three other trials.

Recent polls show that a majority of Americans approves of assisted suicides. A USA Today/CNN Gallup poll released after the Supreme Court decision found 57 percent of Americans favor the practice against 35 percent who oppose it, a split in opinion that has narrowed since January when 64 percent were in favor and 27 percent opposed.

In Miami, a jury acquitted Thursday Colombian physician Ernesto Pinzon who faced life in prison for allegedly assisting at the suicide of terminal cancer patient Rosario Gurrieri in Sebring, Florida.

While the legal battle appears to be over, some doctors are helping patients die although not as publicly as Kevorkian.

According to a survey last year, one nurse in five working with terminally ill patients participated at least once in an assisted suicide at the request of either the patient or their family.

Reaction to the ruling was swift. The U.S. Catholic Conference said the Supreme Court "displayed wisdom and restraint" in a ruling that is "consonant with two centuries of legal tradition."

"In saying 'no' to assisted suicide, our society should say 'yes' to the care and support that show true compassion while respecting each person's inherent human dignity," Cardinal Bernard Law, chairman of the U.S. Bishops' Committee for Pro-Life Activities, said in a statement.

The National Hospice Organization, the country's leading advocate for terminally ill individuals and their families, expressed concern that the decision may raise more questions than it answers.

The organization said it would "seek to educate state bodies deliberating this issue" on the alternative to medically assisted suicide presented by hospice care, described as "emphasizing pain control and symptom management rather than curative treatment."

(AFP)

Americans Have Negative View of Country's Youth

CHICAGO — A majority of Americans have a negative view of the country's teenagers and children, according to a public opinion study released here Thursday.

The study by the non-profit research organization Public Agenda found that only 37 percent of Americans believed that today's children would grow up to make their country a better place.

"Kids These Days: What Americans Really Think About the Next Generation" found that when asked what first came to mind when they thought about today's teenagers, Americans used adjectives such as "rude," "irresponsible," and "wild."

Younger children aged between five and 12 were characterized as "lacking discipline" and "spoiled" while only 12 percent of Americans said it was very common for kids to treat people with respect.

"Americans are frightened for and in some cases frightened of our children and fault parents for the problems they see," said Deborah Wadsworth, Public Agenda's executive director.

Parents themselves were critical of how parenting is handled in this country. Most parents said couples break up their marriages too easily, instead of trying to stay together for the kids, and 58 percent of black, 50 percent of white and 49 percent of Hispanic parents thought parents do a poor job of disciplining their children.

"Only 39 percent of U.S. adolescents, aged 12 to 17, thought parents who are good role models and teach their kids right from wrong are very common," the study said. "Few feel they are respectful toward each other or toward adults, and only one third think they will make the country a better place."

But the study said Americans did not want to give up on kids and would support programs that develop young people's character.

The study was based on two nationwide telephone surveys of 2,600 adults and 600 adolescents conducted last December.

(AFP)

Japan's Senior Citizens Outnumber Children for the First Time

TOKYO — The number of elderly Japanese has surpassed the number of children in this rapidly aging country for the first time, the government says.

As of June 1, there were 50,000 more Japanese over the age of 65 than children under 15, the Management and Coordination Agency announced in a report released Thursday.

The report is the latest sign that declining birthrates and increasing longevity is changing the shape of Japanese society. The country has been struggling to find ways to meet the demands of caring for the growing number of the elderly with a shrinking workforce.

The government says the trend will continue. It predicts that by 2010 older Japanese will make up 22 percent of the population, exceeding the number of children by 50 percent.

According to Thursday's report, 19.54 million Japanese were 65-years-old or over, while 19.49 million were under 15.

The government has been trying to encourage families to have more children. But many couples stop at one child because of the expense of raising and educating children in a country notorious for pricey, cramped housing.

Some people say they want better child-care facilities and new government policies that will help couples have children - and allow mothers to work to help pay for them.

Meanwhile, Japanese are living longer than ever. Japanese women have the world's highest life expectancy at 83, while the men live an average of 76.6 years.

(AP)





UN, NGOs Launch Global Campaign Against Epilepsy

GENEVA — The World Health Organization (WHO) and two specialist bodies announced last week they were launching an international campaign to help more than 40 million people around the globe suffering from epilepsy.

Officials of the three told a news conference the campaign would be aimed at improving health care services, treatment and social acceptance of epilepsy — which they described as the world's most common serious brain disorder.

WHO assistant director-general Fernando Antezana urged governments, health professionals and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOS) to join "in promoting conditions for people with epilepsy to step out of the shadows of social stigma...."

The other two bodies involved in the campaign are both NGOS — the German-based International League Against Epilepsy (ILAE), which represents doctors and scientists, and the Dutch-based International Bureau for Epilepsy (IBE) which acts for patients and their families.

The campaign, to be called "out of the shadows", would bring a powerful message of support to sufferers "who feel isolated, misunderstood and neglected," ilae president edward reynolds said.

"Scandalously, three out of four people in the world with epilepsy are not getting any treatment at all, mainly for social reasons," he added.

The WHO said the disease, first recorded on babylonian tablets from around the year 2000 B.C., was the commonest neurological disorder of the brain and had no age, racial, national or geographic boundaries.

Victims in developing countries from Cameroon in west Africa to Indonesia were often shunned as being inhabited by evil forces. In developed countries, they were often refused jobs and in several, until recently, were not allowed to marry.

The stigma was largely responsible for the fact that 30 million of the around 40 million people who suffer from epilepsy receive no treatment — although it responded to medical attention in 70 percent of cases, the WHO said.

IBE president Hanneke de Boer told the news conference the campaign would also aim at establishing and actively promoting an economic case to convince governments to devote more resources to fighting the disease.

It was also essential to persuade the global pharmaceutical industry "that it will be in everyone's interests to make anti-epileptic drugs affordable and easily available", especially for sufferers in developing countries.

The WHO says epilepsy — which often attacks young people in their most productive years — accounts for nearly one percent of the cost to the world economy of all disease, similar to breast cancer in women and lung cancer in men.

(Reuter)

Ripley's Believe It or Not!

BASEBALL GREAT JIM THORPE HIT THREE HOME RUNS IN THREE DIFFERENT STATES, ON THE SAME DAY IN THE SAME GAME!

Believe It or Not! The HUMAN BRAIN CAN PRODUCE ENOUGH ELECTRICITY TO POWER A TOY TRAIN!

IN 1991, A SCULPTURE ERECTED in Toulouse, France, CONSISTED of A GIANT FORK EMBEDDED IN A BUS!

4-2

Researchers Find Venereal Disease Can Increase AIDS Risk

LONDON — AIDS sufferers with a venereal disease have a higher concentration of the AIDS virus in their sperm and thus a greater risk of infecting their partner, researchers have found.

Conversely, treatment for the venereal disease also results in a lower viral count in the sperm and could help to curb the AIDS epidemic, the *Lancet* reports in its latest issue on tests carried out in Malawi.

Medical teams headed by Dr. Myron Cohen of the University of North Carolina and Dr. Peter Kazembe of the Central Hospital, Malawi, studied 206 patients suffering from urethritis because of infection from venereal disease, of whom 113 also showed positive for the AIDS virus.

Before antibiotic treatment for the venereal disease, the hiv-positive patients had a concentration of the AIDS virus in their semen eight times higher than in a control group without urethritis.

After two weeks of treatment the viral count for semen was reduced significantly for those men with urethritis, though concentrations in the blood did not change.

The researchers concluded that urethritis was associated with a higher concentration of HIV in the semen and therefore a higher likelihood of infecting a sexual partner.

They recommended that HIV-positive patients be also tested for venereal disease and treated where it is diagnosed, especially gonorrhea, as a key component of HIV prevention programs.

(AFP)

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PAR SCORE 145-155
by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL ____
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7- letter word from the letters in each row. To total points of your words, use scoring directions to right of each row. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words can be found in OSW Official Scrabble Words (Chambers). JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

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SCRABBLE BRAND GRAMS SOLUTION BY JUDD

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L O B A T E	RACK 1	= 8
P L A N K S	RACK 2	= 12
U P G R A D E	RACK 3	= 63
F A R M I N G	RACK 4	= 76
PAR SCORE 100-110	JUDD'S TOTAL	159

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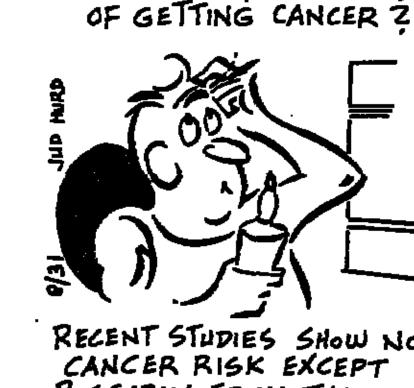
DENNIS THE MENACE

by Hank Ketcham

"I JUST WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT I'VE BEEN A BIG FAN OF YOURS SINCE I WAS A LITTLE KID."

HEALTH CAPSULES®

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THOUGHT

Those who occupy their minds too much with small matters generally become incapable of great.

La Rochefoucauld,

PRAYER

Noon	13:06
Evening	20:47
Dawn (tomorrow)	04:02
Sunrise (tomorrow)	05:50

Study: Switching to Pipes or Cigars Halves Deaths

LONDON — Smokers who switch from cigarettes to cigars or pipes halve their risk of dying early, but still have a much higher risk than non-smokers, researchers reported last week.

A study of more than 21,000 men showed that those who switched from cigarettes to pipes or cigars got a much lower dose of tobacco because they don't inhale as much.

They cut their risk of dying from heart disease or cancer by 46 percent, Nicholas Wald of London's St. Bartholomew's Hospital and colleagues wrote in a report in the *British Medical Journal.*

They retained a much higher risk of dying than cigar or pipe smokers who had never smoked cigarettes — but Wald's group concluded that kicking the cigarette habit was still worth it.

"Cigarette smokers who have difficulty in giving up smoking altogether are better off changing to cigars or pipes than continuing to smoke cigarettes," they wrote.

"Much of the effect is due to the reduction in the quantity of tobacco smoked, and some is due to inhaling less," they added.

But, they warned: "all pipe and cigar smokers have a greater risk of lung cancer than lifelong non-smokers or former smokers."

(Reuter)

TODAY IN HISTORY

1950 — U.S. president Harry S. Truman announces he has ordered U.S. troops stationed in Japan to help Republic of Korea repel North Korea forces.

1956 — Leeward Islands federation is dissolved to enable islands to enter Caribbean federation.

1960 — Independence of Congolese Republic is proclaimed under President Kasavubu with Patrice Lumumba as premier.

1964 — United Nations military operations in Congo end.

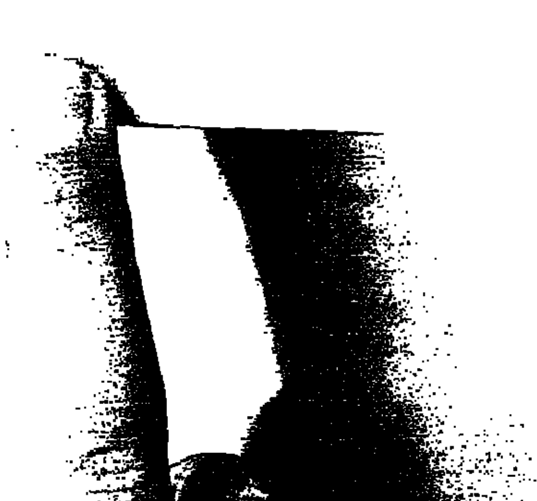
1971 — Three Soviet cosmonauts, in space for more than three weeks, are found dead when their spacecraft lands.

1976 — U.S. space craft's photographs of Mars show that planet once sustained abundant and rapidly flowing water.

1987 — Supreme Soviet, U.S.S.R.'s nominal Parliament, passes laws designed to reverse nations' economic decline.

1989 — Angolan government accuses UNITA rebels of violating June 24 ceasefire.

1990 — Soviet government resumes oil shipments to Lithuania one day after that republic's Parliament agrees to suspend declaration of independence.



IN THE NAME OF GOD

IRANIAN CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION INTENDS TO PURCHASE 10 TUBES OF SIGNAL LIGHT GUN.

REPRESENTATIVES OF QUALIFIED COMPANIES CAN OBTAIN TENDER DOCUMENTS AGAINST DELIVERY OF WRITTEN DEMAND FROM RELATED COMPANY AND RECEIPT OF PAYMENT FOR AMOUNT OF RLS.30,000 TO THE ACCOUNT NO. 108 IN FAVOR OF KHAZANEH BANK MARKAZI, WHICH IS PAYABLE AT ALL THE BRANCHES OF BANK MELLI, FROM 2/7/1997 UNTIL 22/7/1997, ON OFFICIAL PERIOD.

BID BOND IS $1,500 OR RLS.4,500,000 BANKER'S CHEQUE OR CREDITABLE BANK GUARANTEE THAT SHOULD BE ISSUED IN FAVOR OF CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION BY AN IRANIAN BANK AND DELIVERED WITH TENDER DOCUMENTS.

* C.A.O CAN REJECT ANY OR ALL PROPOSALS
* ALL THE CHARGES OF ADVERTISEMENT SHOULD BE BORNE BY WINNER OF THE TENDER.

ADDRESS: PROCUREMENT DEPARTMENT
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هكذا من الأصل

Serbian Opposition Breaks Up as Draskovic Goes It Alone

BELGRADE — The opposition coalition which forced Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic to concede its victories in local elections four months ago was in ruins Sunday after leader Vuk Draskovic said his party would go it alone in future polls.

Draskovic told a convention of his Serb Renewal Party that the party would fight the forthcoming legislative and presidential elections in Serbia without the other two members of the Together Coalition.

Draskovic, who was reelected head of the party, blamed the other two partners, the Democratic Party of Belgrade Mayor Zoran Djindjic and the civic alliance of Vesna Pesic, for the break-up of the coalition.

The decision came as little surprise, as the coalition had been clearly heading for collapse for several weeks, largely due to rivalry between Draskovic and Djindjic.

The leaders no longer met, but insulted each other through the media and in communiques, to the disappointment of their supporters.

The first signs of disagreement began to appear during the 88 days of mass antigovernment demonstrations after the faked November local elections which brought Belgrade to a halt, Draskovic said.

Djindjic had a secret meeting at the time with Milosevic but only revealed it two months later. He has also refused to back Draskovic for the upcoming presidential elections, and has demanded that the coalition be enlarged.

Draskovic also wants to see the monarchy restored in Serbia, telling the convention that it was the best way to bring democracy to the state.

Djindjic was present at the convention, saying it was a matter of "good political manners and to maintain a minimum of coordination to obtain better electoral conditions."

Otherwise, he said, a democratic Serbia would be the great loser.

The collapse of the coalition has enabled Milosevic and his party to regain influence after the serious setback caused by the demonstrations of last winter.

Milosevic has won the backing of the ruling party in Montenegro, the junior partner with Serbia in the Yugoslav Federation, for his bid to become president of Yugoslavia.

The mandate of President Zoran Lilic runs out Wednesday, but no session of the Federal Parliament has been scheduled to elect his successor, even though Milosevic is the only candidate.

The end of the Together Coalition can not help but disappoint the hundreds of thousands who marched in Belgrade to force the Milosevic regime to recognize opposition victories in the local elections.

"Together should pay for the shoes we wore out during the 88 days of protest," one militant said.

(AFP)

Would-Be Reformers of Itlalian System Produce Complex Plan

ROME — When politicians sat down last January to revamp what many saw as a messy, ineffectual political system, Italians jaded by endless promises of reform were skeptical.

On Monday, the 70-member Parliament committee takes a final vote on its proposals before presenting them to the entire legislature. The "I-told-you-so's" and collective eye-rolling already have begun.

The plan in many ways would make the electoral system and form of government just more complicated, suggesting it may be time to trot out that Italian truism from Giuseppe di Lampedusa's classic novel "The Leopard:" things must change so they can stay the same.

The proposals would cut seats in the Chamber of Deputies from 630 to 400, and Senate seats from 300 to 200. But the plan calls for a third body, made up of senators, regional presidents and local agency heads.

The president would be elected directly instead of by Parliament, but would have little executive power and could only dissolve the legislature if the government resigns.

Parliament voting would become more complex.

There would be two rounds. In the first, 55 percent of the seats would be assigned on a first-past-the-post system and 25 percent in proportion to party vote totals. In the second, voters choose between the two biggest vote getters among coalitions. The winner gets the other 20 percent of the seats.

"Better nothing than a mess," ran a headline in this week's newsweekly *L'Espresso*.

The reforms also would give Italy's 20 regions more control over tax money and their form of government, but most other power would remain in the hands of the central government.

The Reform Committee could not decide on changes to the justice system, in which judges and prosecutors belong to the same category and answer to the same regulatory body. The matter was put off until the fall.

After the committee formally approves the blueprint Monday, the package goes to the entire Parliament, which can make amendments. "Where there are amendments, there is hope," *L'Espresso* said.

Parliamentary approval could take until summer 1998. A popular referendum would be held to endorse the proposals.

"The committee failed in its tasks," commentator Angelo Panebianco wrote in Saturday's Corriere Della Sera of Milan. "It was not up to it."

In another sense, however, Italy's political class can claim victory.

Leaders of the main parties, who serve in Parliament and sit on the combined Senate-Chamber Committee, all managed to work together toward a common goal and forge common proposals despite long-standing rivalries.

The members included the heads of the former communists (now Democratic Party of the Left) and other leftist parties, former neo-fascists (now National Alliance), media Magnate Silvio Berlusconi's recently founded Forza Italia (Let's Go Italy), and the opposing splinters of the once-mighty Christian Democrats.

Such an accomplishment would mean little, however, if their work ends up fitting in with a long-standing poltical tradition in Italy of maintaining the status quo while pretending to change it.

The term for that here is "leopardism," after the Di Lampedusa Novel, in which a 19th century Sicilian nobleman bedeviled by the turmoil of Italy's unification says: "If you want things to stay as they are, things will have to change."

(AP)

Mauritania Opposition to Boycott Presidential Poll

NOUAKCHOTT — Mauritania's mainstream opposition has announced plans to boycott the country's second presidential election since the 1991 advent of multiparty democracy, planned for December 12.

But the five opposition parties, who announced their boycott plans to supporters in the former French colony's capital Nouakchott late on Friday, have left the door open for dialog on creating conditions for free and fair elections.

"Today there is no democratic process," Ahmed Ould Daddah, runner-up on the 1992 presidential election, told Radio France International in an interview.

He accused the administration of President Maaouya Ould Sid'ahmed Taya of fraud, saying this rendered participation in elections under current conditions pointless.

"We have always said and we still say that we are open to dialog and that for us dialog and transparency alone can release mauritanians from the impasse," he added.

Ould Daddah, leader of the Union of Democratic Forces, said the opposition wanted an independent national electoral commission, a trustworthy register of citizens and an administration serving all mauritanians "not just one clan".

Taya, then army chief of staff, came to power in the West African state straddling black and Arab Africa in a bloodless coup in 1984, deposing the then military president.

He won the 1992 election in the first round with over 62 percent of the vote, defeating Ould Daddah, half-brother of the country's first president. The opposition cried fraud.

Taya's ruling Democratic and Social Republican Party (DSRP) party won a landslide victory in October legislative elections.

(Reuter)

DVD Disappointment?

WASHINGTON – If you've been following the computer and electronics industries over the past year, you probably expected the new DVD drives that have recently hit the market to almost instantly tempt you to replace your computer's CD-RAM drive, your VCR, and your audio CD player.

If you haven't been following the pre-release hype over DVD, then you should know that DVD - which by most accounts stands for "digital versatile disk" - will in all likelihood take over the CD-RAM, compact disk, and video cassette markets by next year.

The reason? DVD disks, which look exactly like today's CD-RAM and audio compact disks, can hold much, much more data - 4.7 gigabytes' worth in their standard, single-sided configurations, and some 17 gigabytes' worth of data in the forthcoming dual-sided, dual density versions.

That's a lot of storage - enough, in fact, to hold an entire feature-length movie, including soundtracks in several languages and Dolby-encoded music. For computer fans, it will mean an end to swapping CD-RAM disks, at least for the near-term. Today's multi-CD telephone directories, for instance, will be reduced to one disk, and applications such as multimedia encyclopaedias can include much more of the multimedia pizzazz that makes these programmes shine.

But all is not rosy in DVD land. The first crop of DVD drives reveal that while the technology has great potential, the promise of DVD falls short in several areas.

DVD developers have always promised full backward compatibility with existing CD-based technologies. In other words, DVD drives were supposed to be able to read today's CD-RAMs or audio CDs. Thus users' investments would be protected.

Unfortunately, there's a catch. As it turns out, while DVD-ROM drives, which are targeted at the computer market, will read the majority of today's CD-RAM disks, they'll choke on the CD-recordable media (CD-R disks) used by an increasing number of people these days.

CD-recordable disks are essentially blank CDs that can be written to by CD recorders. Users can and do make copies of software, use the disks for backup and archival purposes, and make audio CDs with CD recorders. And because of the substantial drop in prices of CD recorders in recent months, sales have surged.

Some analysts estimate that CD recorders will drop to below 200 dollars by year's end and will be used by some four million people. It's estimated that over 100 million CD-R disks are already in use world-wide.

While DVD manufacturers claim that it's technically possible to make DVD drives that will read CD-R disks, so far no one has bothered to do so. Because CD-R disks are created differently from the way conventional CD-RAM and audio CDs are made, manufacturers would reportedly have to use two separate lasers in DVD drives to achieve backward compatibility with CD-R disks.

As it turns out, DVD-RAM disks will not hold the 4.7 gigabytes originally claimed. Computer users will find that single-sided DVD- RAMs will hold just 3.8 gigabytes per side, and that figure decreases to 2.6 gigabytes per side for DVD-RAM drives. DVD-RAM is the recordable version of DVD, and is due out as early as the end of the year, by some estimates.

Granted, 3.8 gigabytes and even 2.6 gigabytes is still a lot of storage space. But it's not the 4.7 gigabytes originally claimed, and with prices of blank DVD-RAM disks expected to be around 80 dollars a piece, every gigabyte counts.

To cram an entire movie onto a DVD disk, manufacturers have to compress the data. "Without compression," says one representative of U.S.-based electronics chain circuit city, "the standard 4.7 gigabyte DVD disk could only store about four minutes of digital video."

So a compression method known as MPEG-2 is employed to squeeze the data down to size. The trouble is, DVD manufacturers currently use different MPEG-2 decoders, and they're not all alike. The result is that the same movie will look slightly different on different DVD drives.

But there is good news, and it comes primarily from the price arena. The sticker prices of new DVD drives are lower than many analysts expected, and as more units hit the market, competition is likely to put the drives squarely within the budgets of most consumers by the end of the year.

Computer users who want backward compatibility with CD-R disks, though, will probably have to pay more, assuming that some manufacturers respond to the growing wave of dissatisfaction over the lack of CD-R compatibility and release units that address this problem.

(DPA)

Norway Designers Claim Solution to Traffic Pollution

OSLO – While world leaders at the U.N. earth summit debated how to curb fossil fuel emissions and save the planet from environmental disaster, two Norwegian designers believe they have the solution to traffic congestion and related pollution.

Claimed to be the first ever combined solar and wind-power vehicle, their three-wheeled, open, aluminium-framed car is based on a principle similar to the motorised rickshaw popular in many of the world's most over-populated cities.

"This vehicle is a signal for the challenges related to the environment, especially when you think of the parts of the world where the majority of the globe's population lives," said Harald Roestvik, a Stavanger-based architect specialising in solar architecture.

Together with Oslo-based industrial designer Peter Opsvik, he has worked secretly for three years on the first prototype of the new car.

Dubbed the butterfly, because butterflies spread their wings to warm up their bodies with solar energy before they can fly, the general-purpose vehicle is slow in comparison to its gasoline-guzzling contemporaries — it tops just 50 kph (30 mph). But that is not a problem in crowded cities, Roestvik said.

"About 85 percent of people live in Asia. The congestion and pollution in Asian cities are a huge problem. Average traffic speeds in a lot of Asian cities are about 7 kph (4 mph) per hour, compared with 18 kph (12 mph) in, say, London," he told Reuters.

Looking like the legendary Citroen 2CV, with the roof jacked up at the back, the butterfly can seat the driver and two to three passengers.

Its roof has three solar panels extending from the windscreen to a black wire sphere containing the windmill at the back. A battery at the rear of the car is continuously charged by electricity from the sun and wind.

Roestvik said the vehicle could provide a solution to harnessing the natural resources of sunshine and wind abundant in many Asian and African countries, which often spend large proportions of their budgets on importing fossil fuels.

"It is amazing nobody has looked at this before. In cities such as Dakar, Calcutta and Bangkok, the pollution problems are dreadful. I've been physically sick in Mexico city from pollution," said Roestvik.

The butterfly project so far has been funded solely by the designers, but a Norwegian environmental group, the Bellona foundation, has now stepped in to lend support.

Bellona has been a vocal critic of Norwegian energy policy, both for increasing production of oil and gas without dealing with the resulting rise in emissions of the so-called greenhouse gas carbon dioxide (CO_2), and for doing little to encourage reductions in domestic energy demand.

The Scandinavian country is the world's second largest oil exporter after Saudi Arabia and is one of the top five gas sellers to continental Europe.

The state has a burgeoning budget surplus forecast at 57 billion crowns ($7.9 billion) in 1997, thanks to the rich hydrocarbon resources in the North Sea.

"We (Norway) are exporting oil with the result of 600 million tonnes of CO_2 emissions every year and we have the income from this oil," said Frederic Hauge, Bellona's leader.

"There is a moral responsibility for Norway to use some of the income from the oil industry to take the costs of developing new technology... we wanted to show this electric vehicle could form part of a realistic and practical solution to the world's pollution problems," Hauge said.

Roestvik said that, if two Norwegian innovators could come up with a serious prototype for a "clean" vehicle, just think what an industry or state-funded project could do.

It was time for Norway and for authorities around the world to become involved in looking for alternative solutions to fossil fuels, he said.

"Norway is not in the lead in environmental matters. Norway is protecting its oil and gas interests full stop," he said.

"You don't need to be an expert in pollution or have any more proof, just stand on the street corner of any major city and do your own research.

"The world spends so much on conferences, research and more conferences. We're saying: 'We know how bad it is and let's do something about it.'" *(Reuter)*

Rejection of Decency Law to Bring Closer Workplace Internet Watch

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON – Bosses as well as parents will have to become more vigilant Internet monitors after the U.S. supreme court's rejection of the communications decency act, a top developer of Internet management software said.

Stuart Rosove, chief executive officer of sequel technology, said a rollback of government cyber-censorship "makes organizations even more responsible for managing their own employees' Internet usage."

The ruling Thursday reminded companies of the need to protect themselves from illegal online use.

But even more, he said, it showed that the Internet is "a vibrant and very progressive technology that can assist business, but very much like the telephone, you need to consider how you want your people to use it in moving your business forward."

Best practices standards are common for telephones and fax machines, he explained, but often have yet to be spelled out for "a meaningful business communications medium that is becoming ingrained in corporate culture."

That leaves managers who detect employees visiting inappropriate web sites with little idea of how to respond.

In the gap, employees, sensing disapproval, are inhibited from using the Internet as a business tool.

Rosove recommends devising clearly expressed corporate Internet usage policies and enforcement safeguards such as specially designed monitoring and reporting software to protect companies legally while boosting productivity.

First, human resource professionals should head a task group representing departments company-wide, to set policy in response to key questions:

What is the objective for using the technology at the enterprise level? Increased sales? Advertising? Research?

What kind of impact will complete and unrestricted Internet access have on internal company networks? Can it impede the performance of equipment and personnel?

What are departmental priorities for using the net? Who will get the most out of surfing the web, using electronic mail, or downloading materials? Which departments will have scant business use for any of these functions?

Answers to these questions will help in customizing a plan to wrap the Internet's fluid technology around the company's day-to-day practices, he said.

Adding enforcement to usage guidelines is Internet monitoring software like sequel technology's net access manager, which tracks and reports on the most frequently visited web sites, the most active internet users, and the hourly volume of internet traffic.

Monitoring software can also be programmed to assign or bar access to certain Internet protocols or web sites, for instance allowing sales associates to communicate by E-mail but keeping them off the world wide web.

Companies have full legal rights to dictate workplace access to the Internet and the ways it is used, without fear of infringing on freedom of speech, said partner Al Gidari of Seattle's Perkins Coie law firm. Just like any corporate asset, the Internet can be reserved for designated job functions.

Still, Gidari estimates, "less than a third of the companies out there have done a good job of explaining to employees that E-mail or Internet access is a private company asset and something that should be used for business purposes."

But Rosove warns against a heavy-handed approach, saying policies and monitoring both work best when serving productivity, not just prohibition.

"We've found out," he added, "our customers aren't as concerned about employees going after indecent materials at work, but rather just loafing off on the job."

(AFP)

Mir Astronaut, Cosmonauts Become Mechanics in Space

WASHINGTON – The weary crew of the crippled space station Mir is preparing to repair the craft now that the situation aboard has stabilized, NASA said Saturday.

While Mir continues to operate at substantially lower power levels since Wednesday's collision with the progress spaceship, the situation is slowly returning to normal, NASA program director Frank Culbertson said at a press conference at the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas.

Culbertson said the three crew members — two Russians and one American — are still working in warm, humid darkness, using flashlights to save on power.

On Saturday, the station's two oxygen generators were temporarily shut down and the astronauts began burning chemical canisters to release enough oxygen for them to breathe, Culbertson said.

The canisters are the same type that started a small fire on Mir when they were deployed after both oxygen generators failed in February.

To prevent another fire, the astronauts are wearing wear gas masks and keeping fire extinguishers ready, Culbertson said.

He said the two Russians, Vasily Tsiblyev and Alexander Lazutkin, and U.S. astronaut Michael Foale have "worked hard and are tired," adding that the three are not getting enough sleep.

Foale is due to resume experiments on plant growth in space, one of the few us research projects that was not halted when the progress punctured the Spektr research module, leaving a hole 2.5 square centimetres (0.4 square inches), about the size of two sugar cubes.

The national aeronautics and space administration does not foresee the three astronauts having to abandon ship, Culbertson said. "as long as Mir is viable and safe, we should stay there," he said.

It is still unclear why progress smashed into Mir during what should have been a routine operation.

The crew now faces the daunting task of patching up Spektr and reconnecting the solar panels that power the aging space station, which has been orbiting earth for 11 years.

Tsiblyev and Lazutkin will don space suits in two weeks' time to inspect the Spektr module, the director of the flight control centre (TSOUP), Vladimir Solovyev, said Saturday in Moscow.

During the inspection, which is due to take place between July 10 and 14, the cosmonauts will assess the level of damage done to the module's scientific laboratory, the Interfax News Agency reported Solovyev as saying.

They will also attempt to install a special technical hatch to restore the power supply, he said.

Another progress resupply vessel, set to lift off from the Russian cosmodrome in Baikonur, Kazakhstan, between July 4 and 6, will ferry all the necessary materials for the repairs.

If Tsiblyev and Lazutkin cannot close the airlock and isolate Spektr from the main station, the men will enter the Soyuz-TM craft and return to earth, Solovyev is quoted as saying.

The operation carries enormous risks because opening the Spektr airlock could potentially suck all the air out of the space station, making it impossible for the three men to survive. *(AFP)*

U.S. Has Plan to Install Solar Panels on 500,000 Federal Buildings

WASHINGTON - Some 500,000 buildings belonging to the federal government could be equipped with solar panels by 2010, energy secretary Federico Pena said here Friday.

"We spend three billion dollars annually on electricity bills and the federal government has 500,000 rooftops," Pena told a press conference, a day after President Bill Clinton unveiled plans to promote solar energy at the earth summit in New York.

The initiative could reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 660,000 tons a year, which would be the equivalent of eliminating pollution produced each year by 850,000 cars and would create 70,000 jobs, according to Pena.

He said the government would invest 200 million dollars in the solar energy industry, which would be in addition to funds committed by individual states.

At present an estimated 500 to 1,000 federal buildings are equipped with solar energy panels.

An energy department official said it would be necessary to eliminate 250 million cars between now and 2010 to lower carbon dioxide levels to those of 1990.

(AFP)



هكذا من الأصل

Mandela to Mark 79th Birthday With Party for Ailing Children



CAPE TOWN — President Nelson Mandela will mark his 79th birthday in July with a lavish carnival for nearly 1,000 impoverished and terminally-ill children, officials said here Friday.

The senior South African statesman, who turns 79 on July 18, will host a party on the 4th in Cape Town for 920 "disadvantaged" youngsters with life-threatening diseases, Mandela's personal charity fund said.

In the past two years, the president has celebrated his birthday with urban street children and disabled youngsters.

Mandela's guest list this time includes young people aged 4 to 16 from each of South Africa's nine provinces, who suffer from illnesses such as cancer, leukemia and AIDS, the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund said in a statement.

Most of the guests come from poor families and many have "never seen the sea let alone a mountain" such as Cape Town's grandiose table mountain, the charity said.

"Many have at best a few years to live," the children's fund added.

The theme of this year's bash will be a "carnival" complete with musical entertainment and live shows.

The party is being organized by the privately-funded charity, and almost completely paid for by a large number of local corporate sponsors, the statement added.

Mandela's birthday celebrations for children in dire need is rapidly become a "wonderful tradition ... when people from all walks of life make a strong commitment," the children's fund said.

Prior to the celebration, large numbers of children have begun writing cards and messages to "Madiba (Mandela's clan name fondly used by many South Africans), the organization said.

(AFP)

AIDS Turning Africa Into Continent of Orphans

BRUSSELS — The United Nations warned on Friday that Africa was in danger of becoming a continent of orphans unless swift action was taken to control the spread of the deadly virus that leads to AIDS.

But Peter Piot, executive director of UNAIDS, the UN Organization set up to fight acquired immune deficiency syndrome, said millions of children were at risk themselves from the disease.

"Over 1,000 children are infected every day," he said at the launch of the UN's "Children Living in a World with AIDS" campaign. "Millions of children are affected, infected or vulnerable to AIDS."

Piot said conservative estimates suggested that by mid-1996, more than nine million children under 15 had lost their mothers to AIDS — more than 90 percent of them from Sub-Saharan Africa.

But statistics show that millions more parents are carriers of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) which leads to AIDS, indicating millions of children will be orphaned in the next few years.

Elizabeth Mataka, executive director of Zambia's Family Health Trust, said AIDS had already dramatically changed the traditional way of life in her country.

"When I was growing up, my aunts and my uncles were like spare parents," she said. "These days, there is hardly anyone who doesn't have an aunt or an uncle dead from AIDS".

Piot said the new campaign would focus on better programs to prevent HIV infection, providing better access to children for treatment and educating children on HIV and AIDS risks.

But he admitted that UNAIDS and other organizations faced searching dilemmas on how to prevent HIV spreading further — particularly regarding breastfeeding.

More than 90 percent of children under 15 who become infected with HIV are infected by their mothers, he said, either during pregnancy, during the bloody trauma of birth or from breastfeeding.

But in areas where HIV prevalence is high and there is limited access to testing, should mothers be discouraged from breastfeeding their infants?

"It would be totally wrong to stop breastfeeding altogether," Piot said. "Breastfeeding saves lives, but on the other hand there is hard evidence that it also spreads the disease. What we need is more testing."

"Having worked so hard to encourage breastfeeding over the years, it would be totally wrong to throw the baby out with the bathwater. Breastfeeding is not only good, it's cheaper."

The other dilemma surrounds recent research which shows that when pregnant HIV-positive women are given an intensive treatment of so-called anti-AIDS drugs such as AZT, the chances of the child being infected are dramatically reduced.

But Mataka said the costs of such regimens were way beyond the reach of most families in Africa.

Piot said even children who escaped contracting AIDS were trapped in a vicious circle of infection.

"When a child is orphaned it becomes vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. In Asia there are thousands of orphaned children forced into commercial sex work who have since become HIV positive themselves."

(Reuter)

Bangladeshi PM Urges People Not to Take Law Into Own Hands

DHAKA — Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed appealed for calm Friday after a mob burnt to death three suspected child kidnappers.

Police opened fire on the mob in Dhaka Wednesday, killing one other person.

"To take the law in one's own hands, beat or kill someone on suspicion, are inhuman and punishable offenses and it is expected that the criminals be tried by law-courts on the basis of proper investigation and evidence," Sheikh Hasina said in a published statement.

"Child-lifting, abduction or trafficking is a heinous crime and law of the land has provisions for stern action against such offenders," she said adding "the administration has been instructed to take prompt action against the criminals."

Police tried to rescue the men before they were killed but the mob turned on the police van, setting it alight and burning the three men to death.

In a separate development Home Minister Rafiqul Islam warned against being too severe in prosecuting the case.

"It is plain and simple a murder case," he said.

"Probably a group is instigating innocent people in a preplanned way to create a panicky situation to deplete the image of the government ... it is not a question of law and order rather social lawlessness," he told the private UNB news agency Thursday without elaborating.

Police have lodged a case accusing more than 100 people of Wednesday's killings.

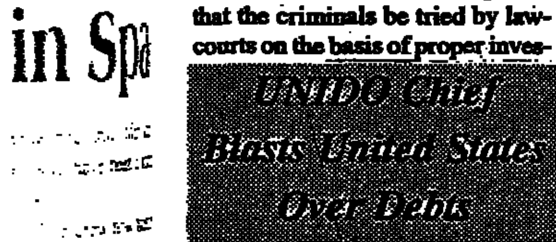
The incident was the latest in a series of attacks against suspected child kidnappers in major Bangladeshi cities and towns over the past few weeks, which have left several people dead at the hands of frenzied mobs.

Parents have been growing increasingly concerned about continuing reports of children being kidnapped, prompting the vigilante attacks, the Inquilab newspaper said.

A police official in Dhaka, however, denied the reports as "unfounded" saying they have received no formal complaints of child kidnapping in the past few months.

"In most of the cases of lynching, people acted on the basis of suspicion and rumour," police inspector Shahidul Islam told AFP.

(AFP)



UNIDO Chief Blasts United States Over Dues

VIENNA — Outgoing UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) director-general, Mauricio de Maria y Campos, Friday accused the United States of "not respecting its international obligations" by refusing to pay arrears to the organization.

In December the U.S. quit UNIDO, a body specializing in industrial development aid to the Third World, accusing it of inefficiency.

Since 1994 the U.S. had accumulated contributions arrears of $66.6 million — a quarter of UNIDO's budget.

"Yesterday I received the text of the Congress decision on payment of American arrears to the UN. In the text there is a ban on paying arrears to the UNIDO," De Maria y Campos said.

"This attitude is in my eyes worrying as it shows the U.S. is not respecting its international obligations."

Earlier Maurice Strong, appointed by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to coordinate a UN reform project to be presented to the UN General Assembly in mid-July, said UNIDO was doomed unless it underwent change.

Britain and Australia have given notice to quit UNIDO at the end of this year and several other countries have expressed reservations about its future.

(AFP)

French Police Eject Immigrants From City Hall

PARIS — Riot police ejected immigrants from a Paris city hall on Saturday after they turned celebrations over the new leftist government's pledge to give residence permits to some illegal immigrants into a protest.

A spokeswoman for the protesters said two of them were injured and taken to hospital. Police has no immediatel comment.

The African immigrants occupied the hall earlier in the day, alleging that one of their group was expelled from France last week although he could have qualified for residence rights under the government's plans.

"We helped the left return to power. They made promises that they are not keeping," said the group's Senegalese spokesman Ababacar Diop.

The protesters had gathered at the city hall of the heavily-immigrant 18th district to mark the anniversary of their occupation of the nearby Saint-Bernard Church which publicized their demands for residence permits. Police expelled them from the church last August.

The meeting was also intended to allow French people to vouch for the good integration of the immigrants into France, thus enabling them to apply for residence permits under plans announced by left-wing Prime Minister Lionel Jospin.

Jospin has pledged a case-by-case review of the status of immigrants who say the previous conservative government' stiffer immigration laws deprived them of residence rights.

(Reuter)

Lost Rwandan Refugee Dies Alone

IYONDA, Congo — She was a little girl lost in exile and she died alone.

Vestable Mukaneza's three years of running ended after a walk of thousands of miles (kilometers) across two African countries to the Congo River.

At the end, the body of the 10-year-old Rwandan child was but a skeleton covered with mottled pink skin that peeled off in sheets like plastic. Her feet were a bloody mush. A few wisps of hair remained on her head.

Vestable was one of the more than 1 million people who fled Rwanda in 1994, fearing retribution for the Hutu-led slaughter of minority Tutsis. When war broke out in their country of exile, most went home. The little girl was among those who fled farther into Congo, the former Zaire.

Her family died or was lost on the long march west - no one was sure.

Vestable and hundreds of other Rwandan Hutu refugees were collected by a UN barge at the village of Loolo on the Busira river, a tributary of the Congo.

She arrived Saturday at a mission hospital in Iyonda, a village 600 kilometers (375 miles) northeast of the capital, Kinshasa. By then, she was severely malnourished.

The months of walking through the jungle left her too weak to recover. The child fluttered her long eyelashes and moved her lips, but managed just a sigh.

On Monday, she ate a big meal of rice, beans and fish, aide worker Alphonse Beka said. Soon after, she died.

With her death, the number of Rwandan refugees at the hospital fell to 92.

Vestable's crumpled corpse was slipped into a white plastic body bag.

Her cortege passed from the hospital across a grassy field. Barefoot boys playing soccer barely noticed.

Villagers fell silent as the dead child was carried down a dirt road, past mud huts with thatched roofs. Chickens scattered.

The road dwindled to a trail, and tall grass sighed as the pallbearers brushed through to the cemetery where 11 refugees had been buried before her.

Grave diggers cleared the ground with machetes - an agricultural tool that became a weapon of genocide in Rwanda. One measured her bent body with a palm frond to size the hole.

There was no music but for the trilling of birds and the creaking of insects. No one who knew Vestable was there to mourn her. A crowd of children gathered, but they were more curious than concerned.

Two men settled her crumpled body into the moist earth. Without a prayer, they shoveled in the dirt.

Two palm trees standing like sentinels are the only markers over the grave of Vestable Mukaneza. Shadows settled over the upturned earth as the sun dipped below the treetops.

(AP)

UN Hopes to Speed Return Home of 22,300 Tajiks

GENEVA — The United Nations refugee agency on Friday welcomed the signing of the Tajikistan peace agreement and announced it was stepping up moves for the return home of the 22,300 Tajik refugees still in northern Afghanistan.

But the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said that, while most refugees seemed ready to return, the repatriation program faced security and logistical hurdles, as well as a lack of fuel in Afghanistan.

Fighting in Kunduz Province between Talebin-affiliated Afghan groups and the forces of the northern alliance, and the closure of an Uzbek border town are hampering factors. Termez, a main transit point for those returning from the Mazar-i-Sharif camp, poses a problem as there are no alternative routes.

Slightly more than half of the 60,000 Tajiks who crossed into Afghanistan during four years of bitter civil war have returned home. Some 7,300 Tajik refugees remain near Mazar-i-Sharif and at least 15,000 are in Kunduz and Takhar provinces, UNHCR said.

"All the signs indicate that most, if not all, of the refugees will return in the near future — and UNHCR is planning to boost its operations inside Tajikistan in order to help them settle in," the Geneva-based agency said in a statement.

Tajik President Imomali Rakhmonov and Islamic opposition leader Sayid Abdullo Nuri shook hands in the Kremlin after signing an accord to end war in the former Soviet Republic.

The conflict claimed the lives of tens of thousands and forced many more from their homes in the Central Asian state of 5.7 million people before a ceasefire, which has largely held, was agreed last December.

(Reuter)

What Needle and Thread Can Create



Needlework by K. Zohour Omid

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Needlework enjoys a long history in our country. This needle-and-thread work is done in two types: plain needlework and decorative, or art, needlework. Sewing, as in fashioning or mending garments, is a classic example of the former. The primary stitches used are running, hemming, tacking, buttonholing, featherstitching (or herringboning), and darning. The sewing machine employs for the most part the chain stitch (used in handwork as an ornamental stitch) and the running stitch, although various models and machine attachments also allow a wide range of decorative stitches.

Art needlework includes embroidery, quilting, patchwork, applique work, and needle-point lace.

These techniques may be used for purely decorative purposes as on an embroidered wall hanging or to decorative objects more utilitarian in nature such as bed covers, table cloths, or mats, and clothing.

Embroidery is undoubtedly of very ancient origin, and there are strong indications that it was practiced by the Egyptians, Babylonians, Assyrians, and by the Greeks and Mycenaeans. Silk robes, banners, cloths, and hangings sumptuously embroidered in silk are part of the artistic heritage of Persia, Turkey, Japan and China.

Quilting is the art of stitching two pieces of material together in a variety of decorative patterns with an interlining usually of cotton, down, or wool.

Patchwork calls for the piecing together of cloth strips of various design and color to form either a distinct over-all pattern or — as in crazy quilts — a piece independent of formal design but usually brilliant in color. In the 18th century, patchwork became a common technique in the world for making of coverlets elaborate in floral and geometric designs.

Another form of needlework often used in quilting and other forms of sewing such as embroidery and dressmaking is applique work, in which pieces of fabric are sewn on a contrasting background material to form a design.

The earliest-known examples of embroidery date from the 18th century dynasty of ancient Egypt. This form of decorative needlework also has been known since ancient times among the peoples of the Mediterranean, the Near East, and China.

With the introduction into the West of the Oriental art of silk culture in the 6th century, the gradual improvement of dyes, and the innovation of pattern books, embroidery was established as a major domestic art. Today, most embroidery is machine-made. The more commonly used techniques employed in hand embroidery are the chain stitch, stem stitch, split stitch, backstitch, buttonhole stitch, also used in sewing and needle-point lace; tent stitch, variously called *gros point* or petit point; cross-stitch, commonly used in samplers; couching in which gold or silver threads are stitched to a background material; stain stitch, various applique stitches; and a number of others.

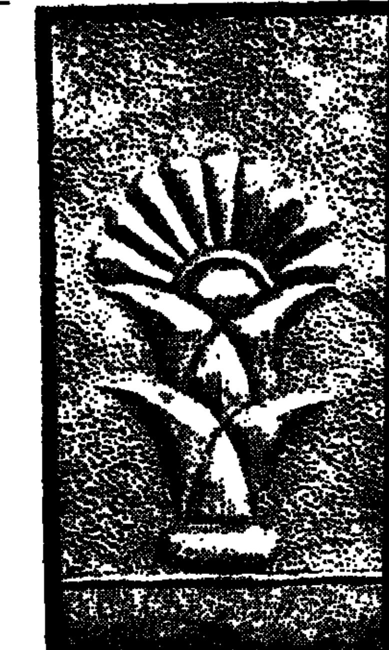
Samplers —originally intended to record embroidery, lace, and knitting patterns and stitches — had become by the 17th century a display of skill, signed by the author and proudly exhibited. Proverbs and other quotations, alphabets, and pictorial representations were worked usually in cross-stitch on a loosely woven linen or woolen ground.

In needlepoint lace a pattern on parchment is outlined with threads sewn flat, and the lace is worked over it with buttonhole stitch, used in a variety of ways. The parchment foundation is cut away after the lace is made.

Contemporary Copperworks: Crafty Creation by Artful Hands

Tehran Times Service

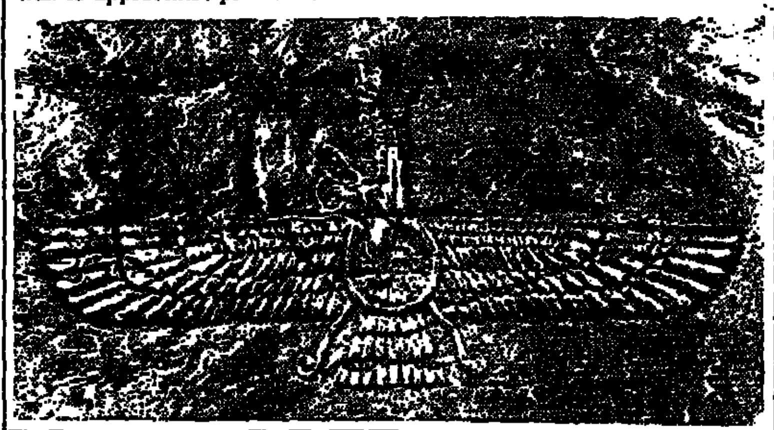
TEHRAN — The 7000-year long art of copperworks had its manifestation in the recent engravings and etchings on copperplates put on exhibition last week at Sa'd-Abad Art Gallery. The works created by contemporary hard-working artists (Mahmoud and Davood Akbari, and Mansour Abedinnezhad) and those remains of ancient civilization excavated by archaeologists, all and all told the story of solidarity among past and present generations. The exhibition revealed well the juxtaposition of art and technology.



The exhibition was visited by numerous art-lovers and art collectors and many works were purchased within the first days of exhibition.

The exhibition, few in its kind, was to appreciate, protect and revive the cultural and artistic heritage of the past generations by a new method relying on aesthetic principles of visual arts.

Although the 7000-year long art of copperworks seems to be unfamiliar among the present generations, but the artful hands of young artists are working hard to revive, once again, this ancient Persian art.





Asr-e Ashura (The Evening of Ashura), a perfect work of thread and needle

Young Needleworker Elaborates on Her Work



Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Khadijeh Zohour Omid is one of the country's prominent needleworkers. She was born in the holy city of Mashhad in 1970.

Due to certain problems, she couldn't continue her education, but through her relentless efforts she has taken significant steps in her artistic life.

Speaking in an exclusive interview with the *Tehran Times*, the young needleworker elaborated on her activities, saying, "I am doing needlework on traditional Iranian paintings. This is a difficult work which requires innovation, and those interested in this art should have a soft and pure spirit."

As for the history of needlework in Iran, she said that principally handicrafts are the manifestation of the history and civilization of each nation, passed on from one generation to another.

Zohour Omid underscored that handicrafts are an effective means for the dissemination of culture, and they reflect the real culture and identity of nations.

According to ancient documents, handicrafts existed during the Stone Age. Studies in Iranian handicrafts reveal that the history of needlework in Iran dates back to more than 8,000 years ago, she said.

Asked if she underwent any training in needlework, Zohour Omid said, "No, I took no special course in needlework. Since my childhood I have been very interested in art. My first needlework was a view of the sunset. When I finished it, I became so surprised, and decided to continue this art.

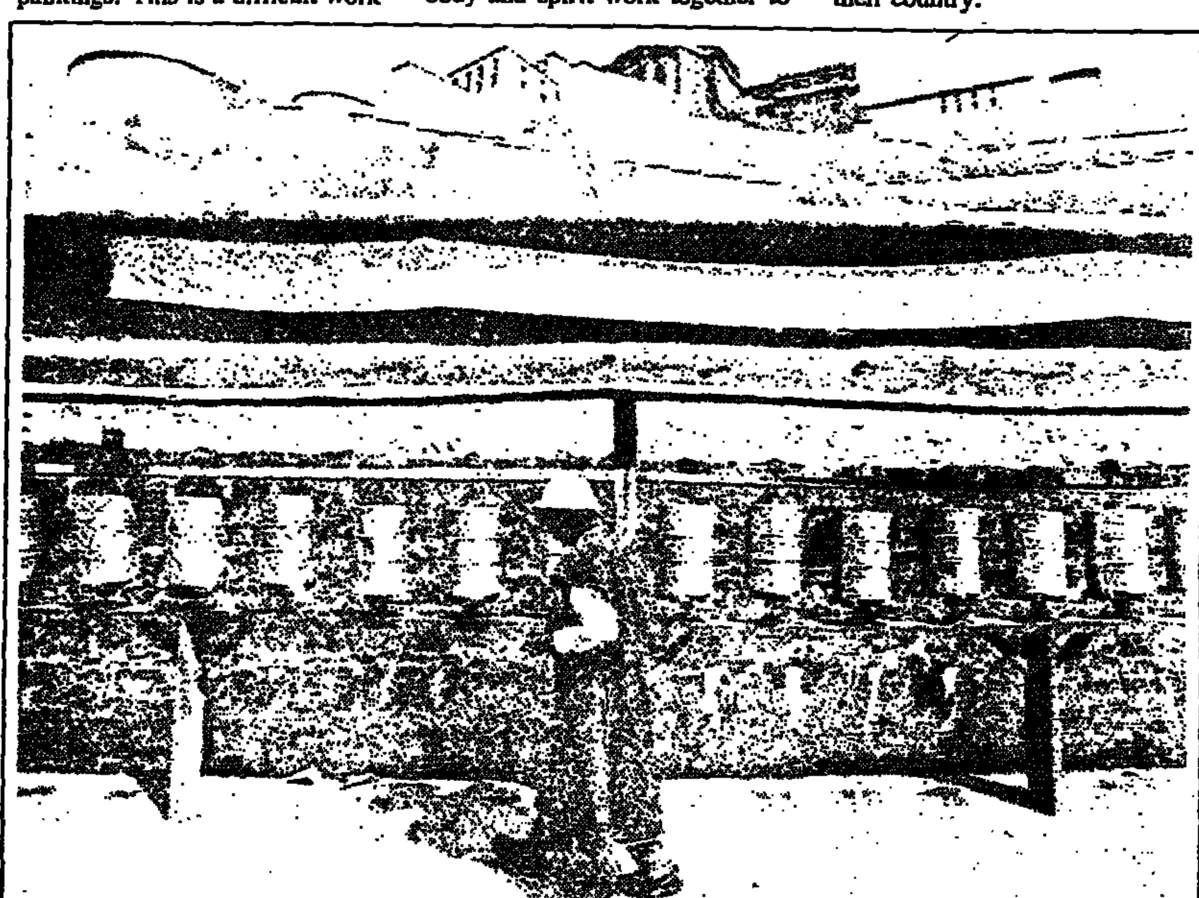
"When I do needlework, my body and spirit work together to create a beautiful work," she said.

Asked to introduce her work, Zohour Omid said, "I have created a lot of works since I began doing needlework. The most important of them are: the *Ghoroob-e Aftab* (Sunset), *Haft Shahr-e Eshq* (The Seven Cities of Love), and the portrait of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei.

Asr-e Ashura (The Evening of Ashura) is my most famous work, copied from master Farshchian's painting. I did it in four years and used some 130 colors. In 1996, I was received by the Leader and granted a Plaque of Appreciation by the Leader's Office for International Affairs.

Zohour Omid further called on officials to support artists and encourage them to create significant works.

Touching on her future objectives, she said, "I want to introduce my work to the world. Other countries should become familiar with the works of Iranian artists. Artists are the source of honor for their country.



LHASA, China: A Tibetan Pilgrim turns the prayer wheels beneath the walls of the Potala Palace in the center of Lhasa. The Potala Palace, once the seat of the Tibetan government and the winter residence of the Dalai Lama, has now been turned into a museum for tourists but hundreds of pilgrims still encircle the palace walls daily to chant prayers for the lamas.